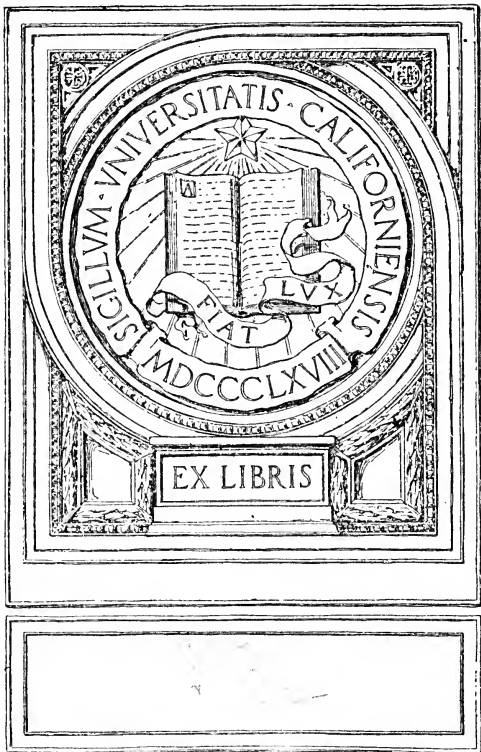
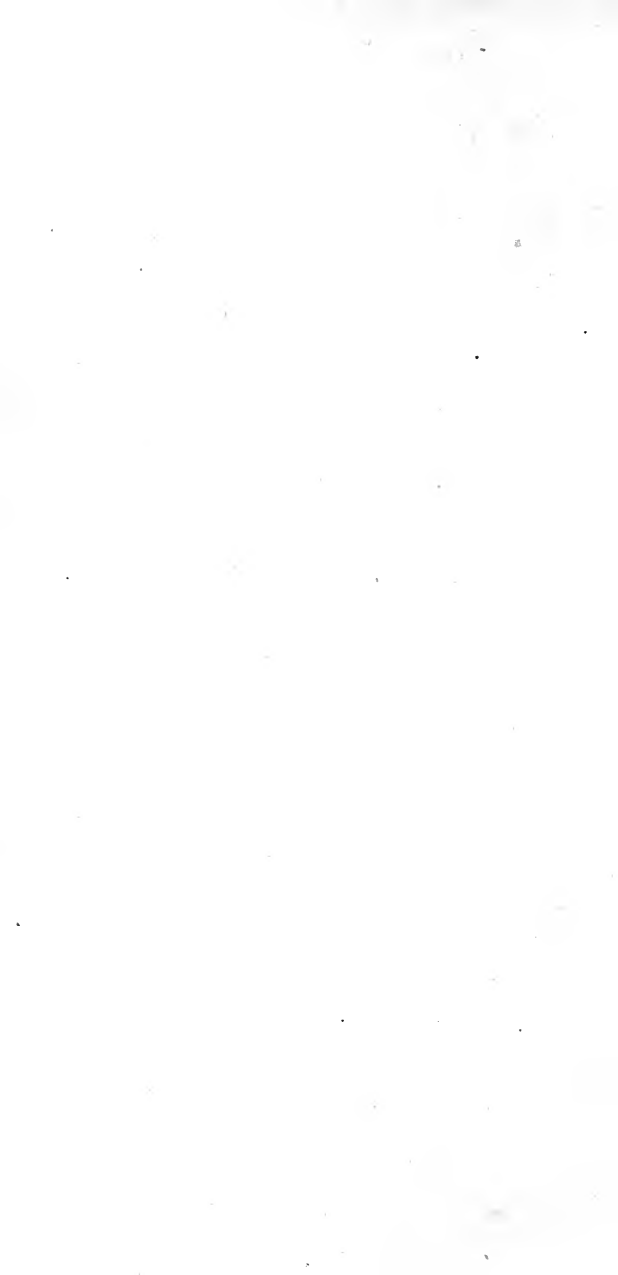


GIFT OF
John C. Lynch.





To Mary A. Lynch from
her husband

February 4th 1869



THE
END



W. R. 189

F. D. Gage





P O E M S.

BY

MRS. FRANCES DANA GAGE.

“It may be glorious to write
Thoughts that shall glad the two or three
High souls, like those far stars that come in sight
Once in a century.

“But better far it is to speak
One simple word, which now and then
Shall waken their free nature in the weak
And helpless souls of men.”

LOWELL.

PHILADELPHIA :
J. B. LIPPINCOTT & CO.

1867.

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for the District of New Jersey.

TO
HER CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN

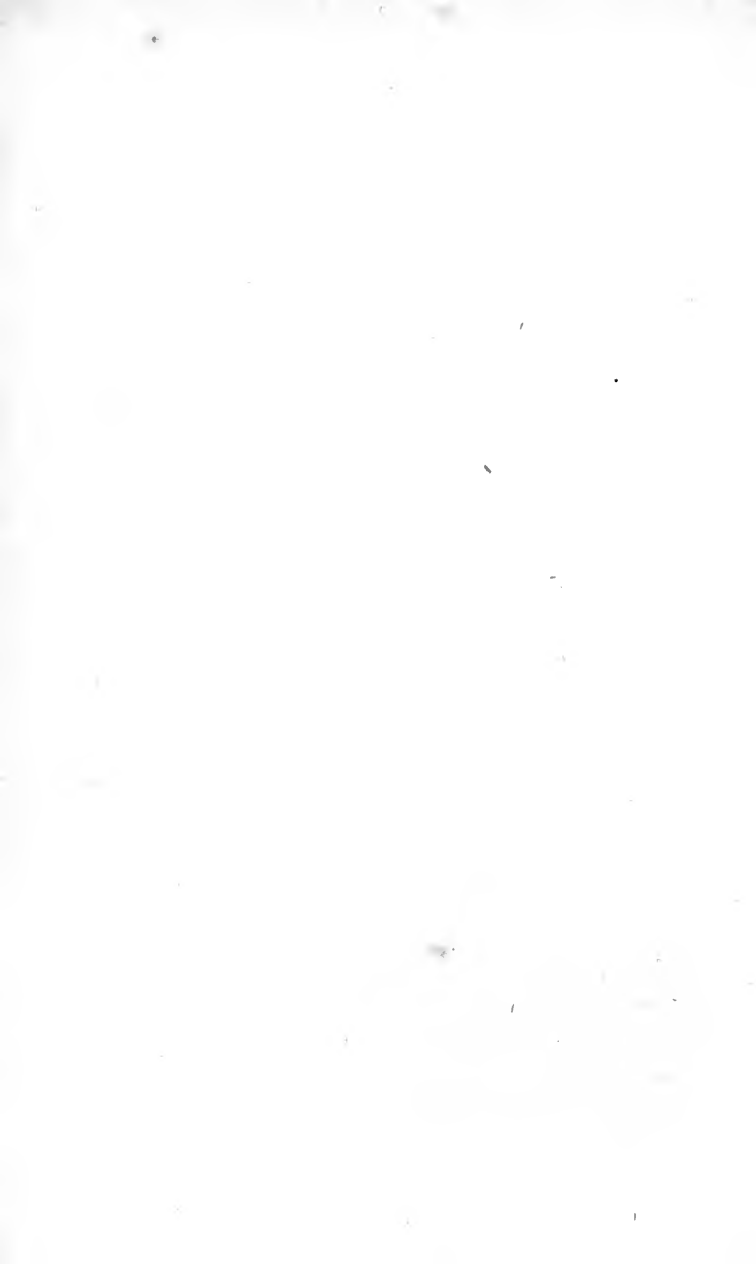
These Home Thoughts

ARE DEDICATED,

WITH THE LOVE OF

THE AUTHOR.

(iii)



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P O E M S.



MY FIFTIETH BIRTH-DAY.

I USED to think, when I, a child,
 Played with the pebbles on the shore
Of the clear river rippling wild,
 That rolled before my father's door,
How long, how very long 'twould be
 Ere I could live out fifty years;
To think of it oft checked my glee,
 And filled my childish heart with fears.

I looked at grandma as she sat,
 Her forehead decked with silvery rime,
And thought, "When I'm as old as that,
 Must I darn stockings all the time?
Must I sit in an arm chair so,
 A white frilled cap around my face,
With dull drab strings, and ne'er a bow,
 And keep things always in their place?"

The lines of care, the sigh of pain,
The "hush" her lips so oft let fall,
Made me wish o'er and o'er again
I never might grow old at all.
Yet she was ever cheerful, and
Would oftentimes join our sport and mirth,
And many a game by her was planned
Around the winter evening hearth.

But then she played not by the brook,
She did not gather pretty flowers,
She did not sing with merry look,
Nor make a spring-time of the hours.
So, when she said, one sunny morn,
"You will be old like me some day,"
I wept like one of hope forlorn,
And threw my playthings all away.

Be old, like grandma, and not roam
The glen in spring, for violets blue,
Or bring the bright May blossoms home,
Or pick the strawberries 'mong the dew !
Be old ! and in the summer-time
Take weary naps in mid-day hours,
And fail the Chandler-trees to climb
And shake the ripening fruit in showers !

Be old ! and have no nutting bees
 Upon the hillside, rustling brown,
Nor hang upon the vine-clad trees,
 And shout the rich ripe clusters down !
Be old ! and sit round wintry fires !
 Be fifty ! have no sliding spree !
And hush away all wild desires !
 I thought 'twere better not to be.

But twoscore years have glided by,
 With summer's heat and winter's cold,
With sunny hours and clouded sky,
 Till now I'm fifty—now I'm old.
The sunburnt locks are silvery now
 That used to dangle in the wind ;
And eyes are dim, and feet move slow
 That left my playmates all behind.

Spectacles lie upon my nose,
 But no white frill looks prim and cold ;
My gray hair curls—I wear pink bows—
 I do not feel so very old.
To play among the pebbles I
 Would love, on that familiar shore,
Where once I watched the swallows fly
 The dancing, rippling waters o'er.

I'd like to climb the apple-tree,
Where once the spicy sweetings grew,
Make grape-vine swings, and have a glee ;
But I am fifty—'twouldn't do.
I'd like to go a nutting now,
And gather violets in the glen—
And wreathe the wild flowers round my brow,
As well as e'er I did at ten.

I'd like to slide upon the pond,
To watch the old mill struggling there
In icy chains, while all beyond
Was one broad mirror, cold and glare.
I'd like to see the noisy school
Let out a nooning, as of old,
Play "Lost my glove," and "Mind the rule;"
My heart throbs quick, it is not cold.

I hear the cry of Kate and Jane,
Of Lottie, Lina, Helen, Sue—
Ah, yes ! (I'll own it) in between
Come George and Dan and William too.
I'm fifty, but I am not sad :
I see no gloom in ripening years,
My hopes are bright, my spirit glad ;
How vain were all my childish fears !

My childish sports! I loved them then;
I love to think them over still;
To shut my eyes and dream again
Of silvery stream and woodland hill.
But life has pleasures holier still
Than childhood's play, with all its zest,
That, as we journey down the hill,
Make each succeeding year the best.

Now stalwart men are at my hearth
And bonnie lassies, laughing free,
That had not lived on this good earth
To love and labor, but for me;
And shall I pine for childhood's joys,
For woodland walks and violets blue,
While round me merry girls and boys
Are doing what I used to do?

My days of toil, my years of care,
Have never chilled my spirits' flow,
Or made one flower of life less fair
Than in the spring-time long ago.
The paths I've trod were sometimes rough
And sharp and piercing to my feet,
Yet there were daisied walks enough
To make it all seem smooth and sweet.

Friends that I loved have passed from sight
Before me to the spirit home ;
But in the day that knows no night
I know they'll greet me when I come.
Hopes that I've cherished too were vain ;
But I have lived to feel and know
That were life to live o'er again,
'Twere better that it should be so

At every winding of the way,
I've sought for love and love have given ;
For love can cheer the darkest day
And make the poorest home a heaven.

Oh ! ye who're passing down like me
Life's autumn side, be brave and strong,
And teach the lispers at your knee
That fifty years is not *so long* ;
That if they would be ever young
And free from dolorous pain and care,
The life-harp must be always strung
With love of duty everywhere.

As violins in foreign lands,
Broken and shattered o'er and o'er,
When mended and in skillful hands
Make sweeter music than before ;

So oft the heart by sorrow torn
Gives forth a loftier, clearer song
Than that which greeted us at morn
When it was new and brave and strong.

Father, I thank thee for them all,
These fifty years which now are passed ;
Oh ! guide me, guard me till the pall
Of death my form shall hide at last.
Let me in love and kindness still
Live on, nor e'er grow hard and cold ;
Bend me and break me to thy will,
But may my spirit ne'er grow old !



A MOTHER'S THOUGHT.

SILENT and lone, silent and lone !
Where, tell me where, are my little ones gone,
That used to be playing about my knee,
With their noisy mirth, and boisterous glee ?
Who litter'd the carpets, misplaced the chairs,
And scattered their playthings all unawares ;
Who called for their suppers with eager shout,
And while they were getting, ran in and out ;

Who kept all the apples and nuts from spoiling,
And never saved jackets or pants from soiling ;
Had ever a want, and ever a will
That added a care to my heart, until
I sometimes sighed for the time to come,
When they'd all be big, and go out from home.

Silent and lone, silent and lone !
Where, tell me where, are my little ones gone ?
There's no little faces to wash to-night,
No little troubles for mother to right,
No little blue eyes to sing to sleep,
No little playthings to put up to keep,
No little garments to hang on the rack,
No little tales to tell, no nuts to crack,
No little trundle-bed, brimful of rollick,
Calling for mamma to settle the frolic,
No little soft lips to press me with kisses—
(Oh ! such a sad, lonely evening as this is !)
No little voices to shout with delight :
“Good night, dearest mamma, good night, good
night.”

Silent the house is ; no little ones here,
To startle a smile or to chase back a tear.

Silent and lone, silent and lone !
Where, tell me where, are my little ones gone ?

It seems but yesterday since they were young ;
Now they're all scattered the world's paths among,
Out where the great rolling trade-stream is flowing ;
Out where new firesides with love-lights are glow-
ing ;
Out where the graves of their life-hopes are sleeping,
Not to be comforted—weeping, still weeping ;
Out where the high hills of science are blending
Up 'mid the cloud-rifts, up, still ascending ;
Seeking the sunshine that rests on the mountain,
Drinking and thirsting still, still at the fountain ;
Out in life's thoroughfares all of them moiling ;
Out in the wide, wide world, striving and toiling.
Little ones, loving ones, playful ones, all,
That went when I bade, and came at my call,
Have ye deserted me ? Will ye not come
Back to your mother's arms—back to the Home ?

Silent and lone, silent and lone !
Where, tell me where, are my little ones gone ?
Useless my cry is. Why do I complain ?
They'll be my little ones never again !
Can the great oaks to acorns return ?
The broad rolling stream flow back to the bûrn ?
The mother call childhood again to her knee,
That in manhood went forth, the strong and the free ?

Nay! nay! no true mother would ask for them
back,
Her work nobly done, their firm tramp on life's track
Will come like an organ note, lofty and clear,
To lift up her soul and her spirit to cheer!
And though her tears fall, when she's silent and lone,
She'll know it is best they are scattered and gone!

Silent and lone, silent and lone!
Thy will, O Father! not my will be done!



COMING HOME.

THEY wrote me they were coming home—*
Those good brave boys of mine;
A coming home from out the war.
(How bright the sun does shine!),—
I thought the morning train would bring
Them, though they did not say
Just when they would be here; but then,
I'm looking every day.

* July, 1865.

That robin does sing merrily ;
I'll go and pick the beans—
The dear boys used to love them so,
When they were little weans.
Ah me ! They've had hard times since then,
On picket, march, and raid,
And many a bloody battle-field,
Where comrades brave were laid.

I've often laid awake at nights,
And listened to the storm,
And thought of them so wet and cold,
And I so snug and warm ;
And when the scorching summer noons
Have withered leaf and vine,
I've thought of them in sultry camps—
Those darling boys of mine.

And not alone of them I've thought :
But every soldier-boy
Who periled life for that old flag
(*Some* mother's hope and joy)
Was dearer for the love I bore
My own. God wills it so ;
And who shall blame a mother's love ?
For all I bade them go.

Sometimes, when news of battle came,
My tongue could hardly speak,
To bless the Lord for victory :
I thought my heart would break
While reading down the long, long list
Of wounded and of slain,
Until I found that mine were saved—
And that scarce eased my pain.

When neighbor Morris, in the fight
Of Wagner, lost her son—
Her last, her all—I felt that I
Could better have spared one !
And all day long I seemed to hear
A voice : “Your turn will come.”
O day of fearful agony !
And now they’re coming home.

I sometimes did not dare to pray
To God *all mine* to save ;
Some mother’s sons must fall, I knew,
For freedom and the slave.
And why not mine ? In Texas one,
And one in Tennessee,
And one triumphant marching on
With Sherman to the sea.

One in a soldier's hospital
For many a week was laid ;
How could I hope, while day by day
So many graves were made ?
Oh ! why not mine ? But since Thy hand
Has spared them every one,
How can I praise and love enough,
For them and freedom won ?

They're coming home, they're coming home,
My four dear boys at last !
Morn, noon, and eve I'll praise Thy name
For every mercy past.
But, most of all, O God of right,
I'll give my thanks to Thee,
That they have striven and helped to win
This glorious victory.

SONG OF THE DREAMER.

I WAS born a cabin maiden
In the deep, uncultured wild,
And grew almost to womanhood
A free and fearless child ;
I roamed the dark old forest,
I climbed the waving tree—
The rudest sports and wildest
Were the rarest sports for me.

Unbraided locks hung ever
O'er my shoulders brown and bare—
I cared not for the lily skin,
Or the glossy golden hair ;
No ruby sparkled on my lip,
No light danced in my eye,
No roses blushed upon my cheek,
The cold world passed me by.

E'en my loved and sainted mother
But seldom on me smiled ;
She called me oft her "trouble"—
Her restless, dreaming child.

My heart for love was longing,
And a look of kindness given,
Made it leap with joy and gladness,
And turned my earth to heaven.

But so seldom—oh ! so seldom
Came love's sunny hours to me,
That I learned to hold communion
With each bird and flower and tree;
And whene'er I heard the breezes
'Mong the branches o'er my head,
Or the murmuring of the rivulet
Along its pebbly bed,
They seemed to teach my longing soul
Of higher, holier things,
And to play a loftier melody
Upon life's secret strings.

The wild, full gush of music
O'er the robin's chirping brood—
The nimble-footed squirrel
As it bounded through the wood—
Made my light heart beat more lightly
In my happiness and glee,
And I dreamed of love unchanging—
“*I dreamed of all things free.*”

Each wild flower's bright corolla
Had a language for my ear,
And their fragrance softly whispered,
 "'Twas our Father placed us here."
And I loved—oh ! how I loved them,
In their simple beauty there—
For they answered to my longings,
From their wild beds, soft and fair.

I loved the dark uprolling
Of the clouds along the sky,
And the deep-toned, awful thunder,
And the lightning flashing high;
And the low and solemn surging
Of the winds, o'er hill and dale,
Seemed to my lonely musings
Like an old, an oft-heard tale.

I loved the softening twilight,
The light and shades of even—
I loved the jeweled drapery
That hung the vault of heaven--
For every little twinkler
Was a peopled world to me,
And fancy dressed that little world
With glorious imagery.

And thus I wandered wildly,
Where'er my dreaming led,
Till thirteen summers' suns had thrown
Their radiance o'er my head ;
The neighbors looked on doubting,
The children of the school
Oft taunted me, with sneering lip,
And branded me—"a fool."

Ah ! little dreamed they of the thoughts
My young head hid away,
Like miser's jewels gloated o'er
And counted day by day ;
Yet I was sometimes lonely,
For my thoughts seemed all my own—
For then no human heart gave back
To mine an answering tone ;
I feared that all my yearning
For love and sympathy,
Would never meet an answer
In the world so cold to me.

"But now a change came over
The spirit of my dream,"
And life became harmonious
As the rippling of the stream—

For fortune strewed around me
The leaves of other lands,
Veined with thoughts pure and holy,
From warm and loving hands.

I seized them with a hungry grasp,
And with glad rapture knelt,
And poured my soul in thankfulness
That I with others felt.
Oh ! many a time-worn volume,
Of rich and varied lore,
Into the dim old forest
With stealthy hand I bore.

And the spirits of the mighty,
Who long had passed away,
Became my friends and guardians,
Through life's eventful day ;
And now my spirit's longings
All found an answering tone—
I was not an unloved one,
I was no more alone.

LIFE'S LESSONS.

CHASING after butterflies,—hunting after flowers,—
List'ning to the wild birds, throughout the sunny hours,—
Looking up the hen's nests, upon the fragrant mows,—
Tending to the lambkins,—or driving up the cows ;
Joining play and labor in my childish glee,
Learned I life's first lesson,—learned I to be free !

Waving on the tree tops,—roaming o'er the hills,—
Wand'ring through the meadows,—fishing in the rills,—
Floating on the river,—riding o'er the plain,—
Plodding through the corn fields, dropping golden grain ;
Joining play and labor with a childish glee,
Learned I to be happy,—learned I to be free !

Laughing 'mong the green leaves, as the ripe fruit fell,
Gathering the brown nuts, in the woody dell,—
Tripping at the spinning wheel, ever to and fro,—
Dancing at the paring bee, on a merry toe ;
Joining play and labor with a youthful glee,
Learned I life's best lessons,—learned I to be free !

Singing o'er my milk pail, while the dews were bright,—
Toiling in the dairy, with a spirit light,—
Using mop and duster, washboard, oven broom,
Scissors, thread and needle, as might chance to come ;
Joining play and labor ever cheerfully,
Learned I to be happy,—learned I to be free !

Conning these best lessons, poring over books,
Dreaming of the future in the quiet nooks,
Gleaning, ever gleaning, as the days went by,
Thinking,—never shrinking,—not afraid *to try* ;
Joining play and labor ever joyously,
Learned I life's great lessons,—learned I to be free !

Humming patient lull'by, with a mother's fear,—
Pouring earnest counsels in the list'ning ear,—
Working for my loved ones, answ'ring grief or mirth,—
Striving to bring sunshine to the heart and hearth ;
Joining love and duty ever joyously,
Learned I to be happy,—learned I to be free !

Cheering the desponding, joying with the glad,—
Nursing with the suff'ring, weeping with the sad,—
Wearying, but not fainting, erring day by day,
Struggling to do better, as life wore away ;
Thus have come life's changes ever unto me,
Teaching me great lessons,—to be blest and free !

Searching for the better, with a spirit strong,—
 Earnest to pursue the right, and to shun the wrong,
 Passed the gleam of childhood, passed youth's sunny
 hours,
 Passed the years of matron age, mingling cares with
 flowers ;
 Thinking of my labor ever hopefully,
 Learned I life's true lessons,—to be blest and free !

Now, as life declineth, wear I silvery hairs,
 Mingled with deep furrows, footprints of its cares.
 But, each deep-laid furrow hath a blessing given,
 And each silvery fibre brought me nearer Heaven,
 And I thank the Holy, ever fervently,
 That labor, love, and duty,—make us blest and free !



LINES

COMPOSED WHILE MENDING AN OLD CLOAK.

BLESS thee, old cloak ! for many a year
 We have jogged through the world together.
 A score of winters, a husband dear
 Thou hast shielded from stormy weather.

I love thee, old cloak ! Thou tak'st me back
 To those days of varied pleasures,
Starting old memory on the track
 Of lost or forgotten treasures.

When I saw thee first, thy ample folds
 Were a stranger's form concealing ;
But I marked the eye and forehead bold
 Bore the stamp of honest feeling.
The first time I took his proffered arm,
 Thy cape o'er my hand was falling ;
Little I dreamed of the potent charm
 That was then my heart enthralling.

Didst see his first kiss ? The stars above
 Looked down on that stolen meeting.
As fell on my ear his words of love,
 Didst know how my heart was beating ?
Thou hast seen us meet, hast seen us part ;
 But amidst his world-wide ranging,
Couldst thou have known the life of his heart,
 Thou wouldst tell of love unchanging.

We love thee, old cloak ! as well we may,
 We are getting old together ;
Thou art thread-bare grown, our locks are gray,
 In life's tempestuous weather.

The world may flaunt in a gaudier dress,
And for the old fashion flout us,
We will not love thee one whit the less,
But wrap thee, old cloak ! still about us.



THE OLD DOOR STONE.

A SONG, a song, for the old door stone,
To every household dear !
That sacred spot, where joys and griefs
Were shared, for many a year !
That spot, where, when the day was done,
And all our toils were o'er,
When the troublous cares of busy life
Vexed the weary heart no more,—
To listen to the night-bird's song
We gathered, one by one,
And spent the social evening hour
Upon the old door stone !

How sweetly now do mem'ries come
Of happy childhood's hours,
When, merry sisters, through the fields
We hunted summer flowers ;

Or gathered berries from the bush,
Or bending greenwood tree ;
Or brown nuts in the autumn time
With pealing shouts of glee.
But ah ! the dearest hour of all
Was spent at set of sun,
When circled round our mother's knee
Upon the old door stone !

My mother's face, my mother's form
Are graven on my heart ;
And of life's holiest memories
They form the dearest part.
Her counsels and instructions given,
Her words of love and truth,
Were my best guardians, and my guide
Throughout the paths of youth.
And now, with gray hairs on my brow,
I seem to hear each tone
Of that loved voice, as when of old,
Upon that old door stone !

Long years ago, dear mother died,—
Yet is she with me still,
Whether I toil within the vale,
Or wander on the hill.

Still with me through my morning care,
Or quiet evening rest,
The guardian spirit by my side,
The dearest, kindest, best !
A mother now,—I often strive
To catch her thought and tone,
For those who group at even-time
Upon my own door stone !

A rose-tree climbed above that door,
Beneath it young hearts met ;
And solemn vows were plighted there
That are unbroken yet.
Friendships were formed, and hopes inspired,
And kindly pledges given ;
And sweet communions there begun
To be renewed in heaven.
Now, many who in love,—lang syne
There met, apart are thrown ;
Yet still they turn with longing hearts
Back to the old door stone !

Years, years have flitted since those days,
And life and love have changed,
And some, who felt most kindly once,
Are by the world estranged.

Some true hearts, too, then full of joy,
Are cold and still to-day ;
Forsaken plans, and withered hopes,
Lie strewn o'er all the way.
And strange feet tread in those old halls
Where pattered once our own,
And spend the pleasant twilight hour
Upon the old door stone !

The old door stone,—the clustering vine,—
Oh ! may they long remain ;
And may the scattered household band
All meet there once again !
Meet, not to weep o'er pleasures past,
Or canvass joys to come ;
But to revive the sacred loves
Once centred in the home.
Meet to renew the broken chain
As if no link were gone,—
From spirit-worlds *they'd meet us there*
Around the old door stone !

OH! SING AGAIN THAT GOOD OLD SONG.

OH! sing again that good old song,
That old familiar strain,
It wakens tones remembered long,
I ne'er shall hear again.

Oh! sing it, sing it but once more;
Each note to me is dear,
It takes me back to days of yore,
As if those days were here.

I seem to see the beechen shade,
The brooklet dancing by,
Where in my childish hours I played,
And sang that melody.

I hear the dark oaks rustling still
Their branches o'er my head;
The grassy bank, the woodland hill
Are all before me spread.

But dearer to my eye and heart,
Springs forth that form of grace,
Of youthful memories, a part
Time never can efface.

Her voice was sweetest to my ear
Of all that merry throng ;
Again I seem that voice to hear,
Whene'er you sing that song.

The old beech-tree has passed away,
The brooklet is not there,
The plow has spoiled the grassy bank,
The forest hill is bare ;
And she, the loving and the loved,
Who held my youthful trust,
And gave the sunlight to my heart,
Lies mingling with the dust.

Then sing again that good old song,
That old familiar strain,
It wakens tones remembered long
I ne'er shall hear again.
Oh ! sing it, sing it, but once more ;
Each note to me is dear,
It takes me back to days of yore,
And starts the sorrowing tear.

THE PERPLEXED HOUSEKEEPER.

I WISH I had a dozen pairs
Of hands this very minute ;
I'd soon put all these things to rights.
The very deuce is in it !

Here's a big washing to be done,
One pair of hands to do it :
Sheets, shirts, and stockings, coats and pants,—
How shall I e'er get through it ?

Dinner to get for six or more,—
No loaf left o'er from Sunday ;
And "baby" cross as he can live,—
He's always so on Monday.

And there's the cream ! 'Tis getting sour
And must forthwith be churning,—
And here's Bob wants a button on,—
Which way shall I be turning ?

'Tis time the meat was in the pot,—
The bread was worked for baking,—

The clothes were taken from the boil,—
Oh, dear! the baby's waking.

Hush! baby dear,—there, hush-sh-sh!
I wish he'd sleep a little,
Till I could run and get some wood
To hurry up that kettle!

Oh, dear! if "father" should come home
And find things in this pothor,
He'd just begin to tell me all
About his tidy mother.

How nice her kitchen used to be!
Her dinner always ready
Exactly when the noon-bell rung!—
Hush! hush! dear little Freddy.

And then will come some hasty word,
Right out before I'm thinking,—
"They say" that hasty words from wives
Set sober men to drinking.

Now isn't that a great idea,
That men should take to sinning,
Because a weary, half-sick wife
Can't always smile so winning?

When I was young, I used to earn
My living without trouble,
Had clothes and pocket money too,
And hours of leisure double.

I never dreamed of such a fate,
When I, *a lass*, was courted,—
Wife, Mother, Nurse, Seamstress,
Cook, Housekeeper, Chambermaid, Laundress,
Dairy-woman and Scrub generally—doing the
work of six;
For the sake of being supported!



"OH, DON'T YOU REMEMBER?"

OH, don't you remember the school-house, dear Kate,
Where we first learned our A B C:
And the old beech-tree where Frank used to wait
Every morning for you and me?
You have not forgotten dear Frank, I'm sure,
With his eyes so laughing and blue;
For of all the girls of our district school
There was none that he loved like you.

And don't you remember Miss Betsey, Kate,
Our school ma'm so tall and slim—
How she combed up her hair o'er a cushion so queer;
And her vandike so white and trim?
She was kind and true—though her look was stern—
And she taught us to count and spell;
And for all the ferulings, now and then,
We loved the old school ma'm well.

And don't you remember the walnut, Kate,
That stood by the school-house door,
Where we used to sit in the summer hours,
And study our lessons o'er?
And our play-house, too, with its sunny seat,
Where we went at noontime to play,
And the hang-bird's nest in the oak hard by,
That we watched from day to day?

And don't you remember the grape-vine swing,
That hung from that oak so high,
Where Frank used to swing us so merrily—
Dear Frank with his deep-blue eye?—
And Henry too?—But my tears will start,
Dear Kate, when I think of him!
'Tis many a year since his pulse grew still,
And the light of his eye grew dim!

And there's many more—many more, dear Kate,
 That we loved in our childhood hours,
 Who have passed away from this green bright world
 Like the dew from the morning flowers!
 And we miss them still on life's pathway, Kate;
 For the loving, the good, and true,
 Whose spirits still hover around to bless
 In this changeful world, are few.

And don't you remember the saw-mill pond,
 With its ice so strong and glare,
 Where we used to go in the moonlight time,
 To slide in the old arm chair?
 And don't you remember the night, dear Kate,
 When we coaxed our mothers to go,
 And pushed them about with such mirth, dear Kate?
 Such joy we may not now know.

For the old mill is gone, and our sliding-place
 No longer glares in the sun,
 And our mothers sleep in the new church-yard—
 Their work and their play are done.
 And the spot where the school-house stood, dear Kate,
 Is the church-yard, silent and sad,
 And no merry shout of childhood now
 Ever makes the old playground glad.

Of all the things that were loved so well,
Dear Kate, by you and by me,
There is left but one—'tis the walnut old,—
And our Frank sleeps beneath that tree!



OH! NO, I'M NOT OLD

WRITTEN ON MY FORTIETH BIRTHDAY, IN ANSWER TO A LADY WHO REMARKED THAT I
WAS GROWING OLD.

OH! no, I'm not old, though the age-frost is cresting,
With silvery rime, my once bonny brown hair,
And wide and deep furrows are quietly resting
On my brow to proclaim that the years have been
there.

Oh! no, I'm not old, though my footsteps are growing
More feeble and slow, and my laugh is less gay;
The rose on my cheek hath long since ceased its glowing,
My eyes grow more dim, and strength passes away.

The rose that from lip and from cheek has departed,
On the face of my first-born is flushing full-blown;
I feel, when I see her so kind and true hearted,
'Tis fairer than ever it was on my own!

Oh ! no, I'm not old ; for time hath not oppressed me,
Though he filched for my Mary the brown of my hair
The glance of her eye, as but now she caressed me,
Showed the light of my own was but lingering there.

I have given my strength to the boys who are bounding
Their ball, with fleet limbs, on the hill-side to-day.
Their loud pealing laugh to my ear hath the sounding
My own used to have, in the sunshine of May.

Oh ! no, I'm not old,—though I've lent all my graces,
My vigor and strength, for the toil and the strife,
To these loved ones of mine, who must soon take their
places,
And go forth to fight in the “battle of life.”

But, oh ! if unflinching they go to their duty,
Ever cheerful and kind, with hearts brave and souls
true,
My spirit will dwell in a temple of beauty,
More brilliant by far than my youth ever knew !

Oh ! no, *I'm not* old,—though my frame is decaying,
The *me* that's within is still buoyant and strong ;
I trust, while below it is best to be staying,
That virtue and truth will its freshness prolong.

The brightness of spring, its buds and its blossoms,
The songs of the birds, and the sunset's deep glow,
Are as cheering to-day, and as dear to my bosom,
As they were in the spring time of life,—long ago.

Oh ! no, I'm not old. 'Tis not wrinkles and furrows,
Or number of years, that can shroud us in gloom ;
But the blightings of hope, amid trial and sorrows,—
They wither the heart till it yearns for the tomb.

Life's suffering and cares have oft made me a-weary,
And dimmed the bright sunshine of earth for awhile ;
But my heart gathered strength and went on the more
cheery,
When I found that each tear but gave birth to a smile.

Dark passion and malice my path have not shrouded—
In the circle of home there is no vacant chair—
My life with misfortune hath never been clouded,—
Why *should* I grow old, or bow down in despair?

But should guilt, crime, or shame, in hour of madness
Seize loved one of mine,—ah ! my pulse would grow
cold ;
My spirit no longer soar upward in gladness,—
Ah ! then I'd be weary, and wayworn, and old.

THE FIRE ON THE HEARTH.

THERE is luxury rare in the carpet of Brussels,
And splendor in pictures that hang on the wall,
And grace in the curtain, with rainbow-hued tassels,
And brilliance in gas-light, that flashes o'er all ;
But give me the glow of the bright-blazing fire,
That sparkles and snaps as it echoes your mirth,
And leaps, in its joy, up the chimney still higher,
When the cold winds without make us draw near the
hearth ;

11 The old-fashioned fire, the cheerful wood fire,
The maple-wood fire, that burns on the hearth.

As I feel its warm glow, I remember my childhood,
And the circle of loved ones that drew round our
board ;
The winter eve sports, with the nuts from the wild-wood,
The apples and cider from cellars well stored ;
I hear in its roar the wild shout of my brothers,
And the laugh of my sisters, in innocent mirth,
And the voice of my sire, as he reads to my mother,
Who knits by the firelight that glows from the hearth ;

The old open fire, the health-giving fire,
The home-cheering fire, that glows on the hearth.

Like the strong and true-hearted, it warms its surround-
ings,

The jamb and the mantle, the hearth-stone and wall,
And over the household gives out its aboundings,
Till a rose-tinted radiance is spread over all.
If you lay on the fuel, it ever burns brightly,
Till the day's work is done, and we lay by our mirth ;
Then we gather the embers and bury them lightly,
At morn to renew the fresh fire on the hearth—
The old-fashioned fire, the life-giving fire,
The broad-glowing fire, that burns on the hearth.

It reminds us of friends that we draw to the nearer,
When winds of misfortune blow heavy and chill,
And feel, with each blast, they are warmer and dearer,
And ready to help us and comfort us still—
Friends that never grow cold till the long day is ended,
And the ashes are laid to their rest in the earth,
And the spirit, still glowing, to God hath ascended,
To rekindle new fires, like the coal on the hearth ;
Then give me the fire, the fresh-glowing fire,
The bright, open fire, that burns on the hearth.

You will tell me a *stove* heats a room in a minute,
Expels the cold air, and I know it is so ;
But open a door, is there anything in it?—
Your warmth is all gone—there's not even a glow ;
Just like modern friends, one is every day meeting,
All professions and smiles, as the impulse gives birth,
But as black and as cold, at the next hour of greeting,
As your stove that has banished the fire from the
hearth ;
Then give me the fire, the old-fashioned fire,
The bright-glowing fire, that burns on the hearth.



TO MY DAUGHTER,

ON COMMENCING HER LABORS AS A TEACHER.

Go to thy labor with willing heart,
Earnest in spirit to do thy part,
Blending with nature thy ready art,
Strong in thyself, my child !

Speak to the little ones gentle words,
Touch with kindness the quiv'ring chords
Of the young life-harp—it is the Lord's :
Keep it in tune, my child !

Teach them the Good, as the days go by ;
Show them the True as faithfully ;
Beauty shall come with its harmony,
 To bless thy work, my child !

Trust thou for strength in each trying hour,—
In thy inner life dwells needed power ;
God will aid to unfold each flower,
 If true to thyself, my child !

On, then, in duty !—remembering
Thy work is the gentle work of Spring,
To bring the bud to its blossoming,
 For the coming fruit, my child !

Go to thy duty with cheerful heart,
Earnest in Spirit to do thy part ;
Blend Truth and Beauty with wisest art,
 And the fruit shall be good, my child !

ALONE.

I'm sitting by my fire alone ;
The embers on the hearth burn low,
And I am with the long ago,
Amid the bright hours passed and gone.

And in the dying embers there,
Full many a face I seem to see,
That once was dimpled o'er with glee,
And free from every mark of care.

And to my vision, now as bright
And full of happiness they seem,
As in my childhood's earliest dream,
When all to us was love and light.

Swiftly my knitting needles fly ;
The yarn, like time, sweeps through my fingers,
And weaves its web, while memory lingers
So sweetly 'mong the days gone by.

I love to sit and muse alone,
While all beside are wrapped in sleep,
And thus my faithful vigil keep
With those I loved—the passed and gone—

And dream that I again shall meet,
Amid the spring-time's buds and flowers,
The playmates of life's happiest hours,
And pluck the violet blossoms sweet.

Ay, meet them in the life to come,—
Where all of beauty, love, and joy,
Shall reappear without alloy,
To bless us in that heavenly home.

Thank God, for every hour and day
Of all the past,—of earthly flowers,—
Since one swift thought can make them ours,
And scatter time and space away!

Why heed the gray hairs on the brow?
When all the past, of love and truth,
Lives for us in eternal youth,
Pouring its riches on the "*now*."

I LIVE TWO LIVES.

I LIVE two lives—the one all pain and sadness
Over the world's lost heritage of gladness,
 Its present toil and wo;
Keeping its eyes fixed ever on the lowly,
As crawling through the slime of earth so slowly,
 With weary feet they go.

I see a red-eyed monster slyly creeping
O'er all the land, and gathering in his keeping
 The weak—the strong as well;
They seem to have no power to meet his cunning;
Madly to his embrace, with swift feet running,
 They find the inebriate's hell.

I see the dim eyes all around me tearful
Over the wrongs of slavery—wrongs most fearful!
 Which selfishness hath made,
While groans of bondmen, all the pure air staining,
Fall on my ear, the very soul-life paining!
 I cry in vain for aid.

And then I see our goodly manhood dying,
I hear the widow's wail, the orphan's crying,
 As war's terrific hand
Hurls his red thunder, home and household crushing
Beneath his power, as, onward madly rushing,
 He sweeps o'er all the land.

“Oh, curse of earth !” I cry with terror gasping,
My worn hands o'er my aching bosom clasping,
 “Must these dread things needs be ?
Is there no power to still this frightful jarring ?
When will our Pharaoh end this awful warring,
 And let the oppressed go free ?”

And woman, all forgetful of her power,
Hiding her talents 'neath her flounce and flower,
 Toying with jeweled bands,
While at her feet her children suffering languish,
And for her help the nations cry in anguish,
 Lifting their bleeding hands.

Oh ! sad the lower life that sees this only,
Weary and wounded, desolate and lonely,
 Haunted by dismal fears ;
Doubting and questioning of God's good giving,
While men despoil his image with their living,
 Filling the earth with tears.

My other life is full of joy and gladness,
Looking above life's sorrowing and sadness,
 With faith and hope and love,
Up, up to where the storm-cloud's golden fringes
Just hide the entrance of the door whose hinges
 Ope to the world above.

My other life sees love and duty blending,
Patience and kindness waiting, watching, tending,
 On all the weak who fall;
Speaking good words and comforting the tearful,
And, with a mantle, azure-hued and cheerful,
 Warming and sheltering all.

And saints go forth clad in celestial armor,
Striving to quell the wickedness and clamor
 Of war, by truth and right;
Teaching the world that ever-quickenening story,
That men, for truth's sake, even from scaffolds gory,
 Step into life and light.

And with this life's clear eyes I see dear woman,
Mother of Christ, mother of all things human,
 So brave and dutiful,
Leading the highest higher, ever higher,
Lifting the lowest to our God still nigher,
 Making all earth more beautiful.

I soar on eagle's wings up, up the mountain,
Where gush the living waters from the fountain,
Near Heaven's high throne ;
While voices near me sing from bud and blossom,
In bird-like tones : " Fear not, to his own bosom
God yet will fold his own."

" Who are God's own ?" I ask, and myriad voices
Answer my question, while my soul rejoices ;
Ay, from the very clods,
From rocks to suns, from all things highest, lowest,
From angels down to worms : " Mortal, thou know-
est
All things that are are God's."



FAREWELL TO OHIO!

FAREWELL to my home !
With its hills so bonny and green,
And its valleys low, where the corn-blades grow,
And the brooks go dancing between.
Farewell to the woods,—
To the rock, the bush, and the tree,
Where the wild birds sing in the days of spring,
And the squirrels go bounding free.

Farewell to our ville !

I've dwelt here many a year ;
I've been often sad, but still oftener glad—
My smiles have outnumbered my tears.

Farewell to the homes
That have welcomed me many a day ;
May blessings fall on both cottage and hall,
As years go speeding away.

Farewell to the streets !
(I have wandered through them long) ;
To the mothers rare and the maidens fair,
And the old men kind and strong.

Farewell to each child,
With its young hopes merry and bright ;
May its heart be true, and its sorrows few,
And its life-path cheerful and light.

Farewell to my pets !
They will come in the summer hours,
And lift their heads in the dear old beds—
My loved and cherished flowers.
Farewell ! May the hands
I love come to gather them here,
And twine the bouquet, at the dawn of day,
And think of me with a tear.

Farewell to my home !
Where I've loved and labored so long,
Where my children all grew healthy and tall,
As duty and love grew strong.
Farewell to the hearth
Round which we gathered at night !
We shall meet no more, as we've met before,
To chat by its pleasant light.
Farewell ! I'm going away ;
But never till I die
Will my heart grow cold to the loved of old—
Friends—village—home—good-by !



THE NEW HOME IN ST. LOUIS.

I AM lonely, I am weary,
Would you know the reason why ?
'Tis not that the day is dreary,
Not that clouds o'erhang the sky.
No. The April sun is beaming
Warm and genial as 'twere May,
Earth and air in beauty teeming
Woo my spirit to be gay.

Merrily the birds are singing,
 Circling round the city eaves.
Merrily the bells are ringing;
 But my spirit inly grieves;
Grieves for old familiar places,
 Far away I've left them all;
Grieves for dear familiar faces,
 Distance hides them as a pall.

This new home is very cheerful,
 Husband, children, all are here;
Yet my eyes are sometimes tearful,—
 Tearful for old memories dear.
By my window I am sitting,
 Gazing out upon the street;
Thousands to and fro are flitting—
 No familiar glance I meet.

No kind voice of friendly greeting
 Falls upon the listening ear,
All seems new, and cold, and fleeting,
 All is strange I see and hear.
Where my violets lay embosomed
 'Mong the grass so fresh and green,
Where my sweetest roses blossomed,
 Pavements cold and hard are seen.

Peering through these dusty shutters,—
'Stead of woodbine wet with dew,—
See I only loathsome gutters
Where my sweetest spring flowers grew.
There the sunbeams lay unbroken
Where once lay the cool, green shade
Of the cedar and the locust,
Under which the children played.

Ah! I miss the birds and flowers
Of the home I've left behind;
Miss the hill-tops and the bowers,
Miss the odor-wafting wind.
This is not the same old carpet
Upon which we danced at night;
These are not the time-worn curtains
Which shut out the summer light.

All is changed, e'en to the table
Where I scribbled rhymes of old.
That was cherry, this is marble,
Ah! 'tis marble, hard, and cold!
This soft seat of yielding cushion,
This is not my worn old chair
Where I rocked my babes to slumber
With a mother's patient care.

This is new. 'Tis richer, better;
Somehow, it don't suit as well!
That was worn and old and worthless,—
Why I loved it, who can tell?
Chair and curtain; table, carpet,
To a stranger's eye may be
Better, fairer than the old ones,
But they're not so good to me!

Memories of joys departed
Cluster not around the new;
Shadows of the loved, true-hearted,
Spring not with them into view.
They have not been consecrated
Yet by warm and loving hands;
Friends and kindred have not wreathed them,
O'er and o'er with myrtle bands.

But I will not sigh in sadness,
Will not let my heart grow cold;
Soon 'twill throb again with gladness,
Soon these new things will be old!
Kind and genial hearts are hov'ring
O'er life's pathway, everywhere.
They will come and render sacred
Carpet, curtain, table, chair!

Flowers of love will spring in beauty
To my fancy on the street,
If the dusty paths are trodden,
Daily, by familiar feet.
If I scatter seeds of kindness
Here and there, as best I may,
Roses fragrant as the old ones
Soon will cheer the lonely way.

Home so loved ! Old friends so treasured !
Half my heart I'll give to you,
Half I'll keep in good condition
Warm and lighted for the new.
I may drop a tear of sorrow
For the past, the far away ;
While I'm pilfering from to-morrow
Smiles and sunshine for to-day.

MEMORY'S TEAR.

HE sang that same old melody
My father used to sing,
When I, at eve, rocked on his knee,
In childhood's merry spring.
Ah! I was light, and gleeful, then,
And knew no care or fear—
That song brought childhood back again,
And called up mem'ry's tear.

Then, mother sitting by his side,
Kept time, with needles bright;
And joined her soft sweet voice to his—
I see her there, to-night!
Each face, each form, each hallowed spot,
Is to my heart still dear,
And seems to say, "forget me not,"—
And calls up mem'ry's tear.

I would not be a child again,
Oh! no; oh! no; not I!
And yet I love to think it o'er,
And live the days gone by.

The *now* is beautiful and bright,
And full of love and cheer ;
But let me for the *past*, to-night,
Drop mem'ry's sacred tear.

Then sing again that song for me !
Touch mem'ry's sounding strings.
Each note calls back some long lost hour ;
Some sweet affection brings.
Then sing for me the melody
My mother loved to hear !
My heart throbs high with faith and hope,
My eye drops mem'ry's tear.



I THOUGHT MY HARP WAS WORN, AND OLD.

TO A FRIEND.

I THOUGHT my harp was worn, and old,
Its chords were all unstrung ;
And like the Hebrew harps of old,
Upon the willows hung.

But while my lips declare such thoughts,
My heart denies their truth ;
For deep within, its quivering chords
Give forth the tones of youth.

The tones of youth ! a sweet, sad strain,
Of earlier, merrier days,
When oft we met upon the plain,
And mingled in our plays.

The noisy school, the grassy mound,
The sheep-fold fence so high ;
The verdant slope, the sliding pond,
The forest waving nigh :

The grape-vine swing beneath the oak,
The play-house in the grove,
The moss-grown seat beside the beech,
Where oft we whispered love ;

The pealing shout, the song of glee,
The jumping rope, the ball,—
Our plays, our mischief, wild and free,
I think I see them all !

Face after face, form after form,
From slumb'ring mem'ries start,
And come, the loved of other days,
Awakened by the heart.

And now my harp breathes forth a strain
Of mingled joy and woe !
I smile, I weep. Ah ! who does not
Who thinks of *Long ago* ?

The past, the past, the treasured past,
Its memories are ours ;
They come to cheer the wearied soul,
Like the sweet breath of flowers.



THOUGHTS.

'Tis said the world is full of woe,
And so it is, and yet 'tis fair,
And flowers are blooming all the way,
And those, who choose to pluck them, may.
But if, in passing o'er the road,
We gather each a cumbrous load
Of thorns and thistles for our back,
To wound and pierce us on our track,
And make each duty hard to meet
And turn to sour the purest sweet,—

Then may we murmur as we go
That "Life's a sorrow, life's a woe.

But if, instead, we gather flowers,
Making the most of running hours,
We may, when storm clouds intervene
And, for a day, the brightness screen,
Be weaving still life's symbol wreath,
A flower above, a care beneath ;
Covering each ill as best we may
With violet-hue, or rose-bud ray ;
Hiding away our deepest grief
Beneath a fadeless myrtle leaf ;
Making the lily hide the stem
Of actual cares, and hang a gem
Of everlasting on each thorn
From erring human nature torn.

So, if we gather each our share
We'll find two flowers for every care,
And thus dress up its tangled bowers
And make *it all* a world of flowers !

THE WEB OF LIFE

At my leisure I am sitting,
Gazing at the carpet fair
At my feet, so rich and brilliant,
Wove in colors bright and rare :

Graceful tulips, full-blown roses,
Lilies, pansies,—everything
That can tell us of the breezes
And the balmy hours of spring.

It is lovely,—and I'm thinking
Of how grateful we should be
To the hand that wove these flowers,
All so fair for you and me.

As the warp, that holds together
All these flashing, brilliant dyes,
Is a thread of sombre dullness
To our beauty-loving eyes ;

So the warp of life, too often,
Seems a dark, repulsive thread,
Taking in but duller filling,
From the weary heart, and head.

If the warp be love and duty,
And we throw the shuttle right,
We may weave a web of beauty
Filled with cheerful hues, and bright.

Come, then, let us to our weaving,
Faithful through the passing hours,
And with earnest hands and cheerful
Overlay life's warp with flowers ;

That the web we leave behind us,
Like this carpet on the floor,
May remain a thing of beauty—
But, unlike, fade nevermore—

That the weary feet, that follow
Us, adown the sands of life,
May tread lighter for our living
And have less of toil and strife.

AFTER THE RAIN.

THE earth is in her gala dress,
This cool and breezy morn ;
See how the diamonds flash and glow,
Along the freshened corn !

While every spire and leafy spray
Is hung with jewels bright ;
Where tiny rainbows dance and play
Amid the morning light.

All things look up in cheerfulness,
For on the thirsty sod
Has fallen a soft, and gentle shower,
Fresh from the hand of God.

'Twill bring far better things than gems,
From out the sombre mould ;
And sparkling jewels on the corn,
Will turn, ere long, to gold.

Now should the hearts of men rejoice,
And bless the Father's hand,
Who, through these tiny drops of rain,
Enriches all the land !

AS YE SOW, YE SHALL REAP.

SCATTER we must and scatter we will,
 Strewing at broadcast all the day long,
 Over the valley, or on the hill,
 The seeds of right, or the seeds of wrong.

Every thought is an embryo,
 Every word is a planted seed.
 Look to it well that the seed ye sow
 Be for the flower, and not the weed !

Folly and vice, gayly sown in Spring,
 Oh ! trust me, when reaping days are come,
 Will nothing to manhood's storehouse bring
 To make glad shouts for the "harvest home."

Too often a precious hour is spent
 In seeming pleasure, in youthful time,
 That bids us, a whole life-long, repent—
 The fruit of the seed is sin, and crime !

Scatter we must and scatter we will,
 Strewing broadcast wherever we go ;
 In life's valley, or on its hill,
 Seeds for humanity's weal, or woe.

Beware! beware, lest the seeds ye sow
Be mingled with malice, pride, and strife;
For wheat and tares will together grow—
Till the reapers bind, in the fields of life.

Sow the *good* seed for the coming hour, .
That all thy days may be calm, and free;
And so ye may find the immortal flower
In the golden sheaves of Eternity!



IMPROMPTU.

My dear Mrs. G——, if I were a Fairy
I'd whisk you this day to the top of Mt. Airy
On a humming-bird's wings; and I'd make your coach
 top
Of a blue morning-glory, turned bottom side up!
Oh! how snugly you'd ride through the wind, and the
 rain,
With nothing to stop you, or give you a pain,
How happy I'd be, just to welcome you here!
And bid you partake of my home, and my cheer;

With my circle of loved ones around the warm hearth,
To add to our joy with your soul-cheering mirth.
You should have the best chair; ah! 'tis aged and
worn,

Its cushion is threadbare, and faded, and torn;
Its arms bear the marks of belligerent spirits,
That stopped not to honor its age, or its merits;
But hacked it, and hewed it, and scraped it at will,
Just because,—for their lives,—they *could not sit* still.
Oh! I love every mark on that treasured old chair,
For the soft hand of childhood placed every one there,
In some frolicsome moment of mischief or glee;
And has long been forgiven, by mother-love, free.
A snug little stool we would place for your feet,
By my own “blue eyed Mary” embroidered, so neat!
With two orange-billed swans swimming grave side by
side,
On a blue and white ground, meant for ocean waves
wide.

My birdies about you, should flit on the wing,
And carol the sweetest of lays to the Spring—

But Alack, and Alas! since I *am not* a Fairy,
I can't have you now by my side on Mt. Airy.
Though sad, and half sick, with a very bad cold,
And feeling beside very lazy and old;

Yet in spirit, dear E., I've been with you this hour.
I wonder if *you* feel the magical power
And are thinking of me, in the twilight of even
While dark heavy clouds overshadow the heaven.
While chilly March winds o'er the hillside are sweeping,
To blight all the flowers that for sunlight are peeping.

While I scribble away all this nonsense to thee,
I'm waiting for husband to come home to tea.
Ah! yonder he comes, slowly wending his way,
Up the long, winding path. At the close of the day
When labor is ended, he's faithful to come
And tell me each eve "There is no place like home."
His steps are grown slow, and his locks are grown gray,
But his heart is as warm as it was in his May,
And we'll jog on through life loving cheerfully still,
Till we lie down to sleep at "*the foot of the hill.*"

* * * * *

Well, my pen has been roaming wherever it pleased,
Like a bird on the wing from its cage just released.
And since it has laid us (my good man and I)
Down to sleep in the grave—(now, pray,—*do not cry!*)
'Tis best to be closing this pitiful strain,
By promising "never to do so again."
Now, will you not write me, my Eleanor, dear!
Just a few lines some day, my poor spirit to cheer?

Send, *at least*, an envelope,—perhaps one or two,
 Just to say, “I am well,”—or, “Aunt Fanny, how’re
 you?”

If you don’t I shall surely get into a rage
 And write you *again*,—

Yours, FRANCES D. GAGE.



BE KIND TO THY MOTHER.

OH! there’s never a pang that filleth the eye,
 With such bitter and cruel tears,
 Or maketh such phantoms go sweeping by
 Of the past and shadowy years;
 As the taunt of a child—a charge of wrong
 From a son to her who hath loved him long.

The boy! who hath grown to his manhood’s prime
 Through her daily toil and care!
 The boy! whom she ’th given her best spring-time,
 That his might be pure and fair,
 And often for whom (when his years were less)
 Hath periled *her life* his own to bless;

Whom now, with a far more reverent care
Than the days of his childhood knew,
She watches and prays for, that he may share
The good of life, and its ill eschew.
Perchance, too anxious, her eyes have grown dim
With the tears that seem foolish tears to him.

So he answers her love with thoughtless sneer
As he would of a playmate wild;
And laughs at her holiest care and fear
As the whim of a fretful child.
Thus he pierces her heart so sad and sore
With bitterer pangs than have gone before.

She recalls the agony of his birth,
And the wearisome infant hours,
His childish trials, his boisterous mirth,
That so greatly tasked her powers.
And the long weary days come back again
When none but his mother could ease his pain.

Hath she grown impatient and fretful now?
Let thy lips only kind words speak,
For the trembling nerve and the silvered brow
And the furrow adown the cheek,
Thou hast helped to make; then dry her sad tears,
Give her back her love in these fading years.

Bear with her, son, as she once bore with thee,
Now her days have grown short and few,
No other will ever give love so free,
So cheerful, so lavish, so true!
Remember, that every harsh word you may speak,
Some half-severed chord of the heart will break.

Touch gently the strings, so shattered and old!
Keep the instrument well in tune,
That the song of November may not be cold,
But as genial as that of June.
Then its dying notes to thine ear shall be
A blessing for Time and Eternity!



I KNOW A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN.

A TRIBUTE TO L. M., OF PHILADELPHIA.

I KNOW a beautiful woman,
But she's *not* of "sweet sixteen."
Full sixty winters have come and gone,
The "Now" and the "Then" between.

Yet every year hath added
A something so fair and true,
That to me she's the sweetest woman,
I think, that I ever knew !

Her eye may be dimmer growing,
It hath lost the glance of youth ;
But up, from the inner fountains,
It is flashing love and truth.
Her cheeks have not all the freshness
Of the rose-bud, glowing red ;
The purity of the lily,
Full-blown, has come in its stead.

And her voice is low and soothing
As the hum of summer bees ;
Or twilight rustling 'mong the corn,
Or the sough of autumn trees.
And she moves with a grace so gentle
Among her garden bowers,
A brighter radiance than their own,
Seems falling on her flowers.

All over her face of beauty
There are lines of days gone by ;
Of holy loves and earnest hopes,
That have wrought there patiently.

They are lovelier far than dimples,
For I know that each was given
To mark the years of dutiful life
That have fitted her for heaven.

For the poor and needy know her;
The toiling, suffering slave,
The fugitive ready to perish,
Bless her spirit true and brave!
The sinned against and the sinning,
The prisoner in his cell,
Rejoice when they hear her footstep;
For they know its sound right well!

I never think of that woman,
But my heart throbs high with love,
And I ask,—“Can she be more beauteous
In the blissful realms above?”
I can scarcely, in my dreaming,
See her face more fair and bright.
She seems to me now, with her radiant brow,
A Spirit of love and light!

The poet may sing his praises
Of the glow of “sweet sixteen;”
But there’s a holier beauty,
Of seventy-five, I ween;

For the girlish face if moulded
By a true and loving heart,
Will brighten as the heart throbs on,
Rechiseling every part.



WOMAN—THE POET.

"THE GREATEST FEMALE POET," SAID A GENTLEMAN FRIEND TO ME, "HAS
FALLEN BELOW OUR MEDIOCRE MEN."

TELL me not, proud man! that woman
Never yet hath wrought her name,
With the golden threads of Genius,
Topmost, on the scrolls of fame!

That the strongest, loftiest effort,
Of the greatest woman's soul,
Hath but half way climbed the mountain,
Hath but midway reached the goal;—

There, beside the weaker brothers,
In the shadows cold and high,
She has thrown her withering laurels,
And hath laid her down to die;

While above her, in the sunbeams,
Homer, Milton, Shakspeare bask,
And with mocking voices ever,
Tell her of her hopeless task.

* * * *

Oh! there is a glorious poem,
In each earnest, woman-heart,
Struggling for a mighty utt'rance,
Struggling to become a part

Of the never-ending drama,
Acting on Life's fitful stage,—
Hourly, daily, monthly, yearly,—
Love and hope on every page.

Think ye not, because she's plodding,
Plodding duty's daily round,
That no glowing lines of beauty
In her footsteps may be found.

When she giveth meat in season,
To her household, morn and night;
When she giveth ease to suff'ring,
Or to darkness bringeth light;—

While she plieth broom and duster,
Needle, scissors, here and there,
Leaves she not a glow, a gladness—
Do not all things grow more fair

* * * *

Mark, proud man, the patient mother,
Bending o'er the cradle low;
List ye to her stirring heart-songs,
Improvised in love-tones low.

She is writing, ever writing,
Poems, earnest, true, and strong,
On that fair, unsullied life-page,
Nestled snowy downs among.

She is writing, ever writing,
Love all holy holds her pen.
Will her lofty aspirations
E'er be reached by mortal men?

Can the creature she is forming
Soar beyond her earnest thought,
Or produce one trace of beauty
Which her soul hath not inwrought?

She is writing, ever writing ;—
 Busy day or quiet night,
Finds her pen still poised and ready,
 Some great poet-thought to write.

Here a line of love and beauty,
 There a touch sublimely true,
Now a stanza breathing duty,—
 Ever marking something new ;

Till, at last, her work completed,
 Like a regal flower unfurled,
Every petal fresh and glorious,
 Bursts her Poem on the world.

Bursts to live and glow forever,—
 Shedding fragrance o'er the soul,
Gathering power, and strength, and wisdom,
 While the eternal years shall roll.

Bursts to live and glow forever,
 Live above the earth-chained clod,
Drawing all things human onward,
 Upward to the throne of God.

Oh ! what living, breathing Poems,
 Now are echoing through the land,
Written from the heart of woman,
 While God held her trembling hand.

What were Homer, Milton, Shakspeare,
All who've ever near'd Fame's goal,
But th' inspired, the living Poems
Of a loving mother's soul!

Man may form the grand Ideal,
And lay down the glorious plan;
But the woman's work is real—
'Tis the mother makes the man.*



MUSINGS.

YESTERDAY, it rained and heavy clouds
Swept o'er the world, like black mysterious shrouds
Hiding the sun. The winds went howling by
With fearful cry—
While the frost spirit, on his glittering steed
Caught every falling globule as it fell,
On mountain or in dell,
On feathery pine, or roadside dying weed,
And to a diamond turned it; hanging gems
On all the waving stems—

* "Men are what mothers make them."—R. W. EMERSON.

Spreading the landscape o'er with glassy light
And jewels sparkling bright.

And yet the day was desolate,
As the cold hand of fate ;
No glow, no gladness—
No warmth to cheer the sadness,
While shivering forms went flitting to and fro,
With tottering feet and slow,
Drawing their wintry garments closer still
To hide them from the chill.
And the poor beggar child, with aching feet
Upon the icy street
Went in her tattered garments, freezing, round
Upon the ground,
For the waste chip to light the hovel fire,
And lift its blaze up higher.

And friend accosted friend, and coldly said,
With ominous shake of head,
“’Tis a most wretched day,” “Abominable weather,”
“Too bad,” “Too cold,” “Too icy,” and “’Tis mean”—
And then between—
Came questionings as to whether
“Miss Simper’s party would be full to-night ;
It was too bad her bright hopes thus to blight.

Oh! it was such a pity,
'Twould be the grief of half the city,
That rain and ice and snow,
And storm and blow,
Should mar her brilliant expectations—
When she had made such queenly preparations.”

Another said, “The audience will be small
At Union Hall—
For if the greatest genius that is human
Were going to speak on such a night on ‘Woman,’”
The people would not venture out to hear—
“’Twill be a failure, that is very clear.”

The women fretted—for 'twas washing day—
No clothes could dry with such a sky—
The farmer could not market corn or hay—
Nor housemaids do the mopping—
Or belles go out a shopping—
And everybody snarl'd
As if the world was gnarl'd,
And all the year to be one storm and fear.
And all the dark hours were still darker made
By discontented shade,
By sighs and sorrowing
And idle trouble borrowing.

Because forsooth the hue
Of the sky was not blue.

* * * *

To-day the sun shines fair,
And on the air
The warmth of almost everyday life is borne,
And tree and shrub are shorn
Of all their glittering brightness.
The white clouds float in sight now,
And the glad earth is radiant in the glow
Of a bright winter day;
And men go to and fro,
Whistling their merriment as if 'twere June.
(How changed the tune !)
They laugh and chat,
And all of that.
And girls with cheerful faces,
And winning smiles and graces,
Light up the street;
And children's tinkling feet
Make music on the paths
Where yesterday
The glittering cold ice lay.

* * * *

Speak out your gratitude,
Oh, mortals, to the Infinite and Good !
Remembering that the storm and all its power
To purify the hour,
Came from the self-same hand that gives to-day
Its cloudless beauty and its genial ray,
And strive for faith wherever we may dwell,
To know and feel, God doeth all things well.

Remembering that the self-same hand which holds
The storm and sunshine, all the world controls,
And in his wisdom sends the wintry chill
To bind the dancing rill,
Or bids the fierce volcano lift its head,
And bury nations 'neath its burning tread ;
Doth also paint the violet by the brook,
Or the sweet wild rose in its shady nook,
Gives angel beauty to the laughing child,
To birds their wood-notes wild,
And if we love and trust in Him, by-and-by
He'll show us that the sun is ever nigh.

AUNT HETTY'S TOILET

IN 1780.

COME listen, girls ! and I will tell
About Aunt Hetty's toilet.
'Twas one that graced her passing well —
Don't laugh and make me spoil it !
Aunt Hetty stood just "five feet ten,"
Without her shoes and hose ;
Well-formed and graceful too, withal,—
Blue eyes and Grecian nose.

Her hair, above her reverence bump
Was always neatly tied,—
And o'er a "nine-inch" cushion drawn,
And fastened on one side ;
While fearful "frizzles" stood upright
Upon her temples smooth,—
For glossy ringlets then were held
Both ugly and uncouth.

Long strings of pearls, of milky hue,
Hung careless from her neck,
O'er her vandyke, cut square before,
Of muslin without speck.

Her dress of damask silk was made
Full five ells wide or more,—
Was stiffened with a whalbone hoop,
And swept the sanded floor.

The ample sleeve the elbow reached,
And fastened by a band;
And gloves, with frills six inches deep,
Adorned each pretty hand.
The waist, three-quarters of a yard,
Was trimmed with ribbons o'er;
With point and bow, with tassel hung,
And buttoned up before.

A spring-kid shoe, with peaked toe,
Adorned her little foot;
With heel full out three inches high
And made of cork,—to boot!
Her 'kerchief, made of cambric good,
Was always large and ample,
Without embroidery or lace—
(Girls! follow her example).

Her bonnet; but my weary muse
Her feeble wings must drop;
If you would see its like again
Go view an old gig-top!

And when "Aunt Hetty" went to church
In corks, calash, and all,
She walked in seven feet dignity—
Oh! me; but "wasn't she tall!"



RAG-CARPET RHYMES.

As I sat stripping, stripping away,
Making my carpet of rags, to-day,
Shredding up garments all worn and old,
Which once had sheltered from heat and cold
The loves of the household,—in by-gone time
When they were new, and in their prime,—
My thoughts were away with those vanished years,
Their loves and their labors, their hopes and fears.

I touched not a garment but brought to mind
Some pleasure, or pain, long left behind,
And busy Mem'ry would often beguile
The starting tear, with a passing-smile,—
Linking life's bitterest hour of pain
To its sweetest day by a golden chain.

So closely mingled were joy and grief,
The darkened moments so few and brief,
That I thought—and I hummed my thought aloud—
“There’s a silver lining to every cloud.”

First came the tiniest slip of red,
That used to lie in my cradle-bed,
But, folded away ’mong forgotten cloths,
It was ruined at last by wicked moths.
The relic unrolled, I seemed to see
My crowing baby upon my knee,
With his clear blue eye, and golden hair,
And the rosy cheeks, to me so fair!
I scarce could believe that ten long years
Had over him swept, with their smiles and tears,
And my pet had grown to a stalwart child,
With a bounding step, and a spirit wild,
Yet ever as joyful and full of glee,
As in the days of his infancy.
I paused ’mid my work, with a mother’s care,
And sent up to Heaven the anxious prayer,—
“Oh! keep him, dear Father, as pure and true
As he was when this tiny frock was new!”

Then came a tunic of blue and brown,
Which, so torn and tattered both up and down,

Had fettered the limbs of a roguish elf
Who said, "The tunic just tore itself"—
He "Only climbed through the thorny pear,
To see if the cat-bird's nest was there.
'Twas *the sticks* that tore it through and through,
And, mother, the eggs were black and blue!"—
May no hasty impulse lead you to stray,
My darling boy! from the right away,
Till conscience, torn, like this simple dress,
Is cast aside for its worthlessness.

These pants so faded, with patch so bright,
Call up before me a proud young wight,
Who scorned to wear the gay patch to school,
So played the truant, and "broke the rule,"
And wandered all day by the river-side,
Pierced by the cold, and pained by his pride,
And came at night with an aching head,
To throw himself wearily on his bed,
Where, parching with fever, for weeks he lay,
Panting his fresh young life away;
While over the couch with fear I bent,
Till the fell disease its force had spent,
And slowly up from his bed of pain,
He rose, and went to his sports again.
Was it wise to force my spirited child
To meet the jeers of his comrades wild,—

His young and sensitive heart to sting
With bitter pain—for so small a thing?

The next was a frock, so short and trim,
With its corded belt and its boddice prim !
It called up a girl in her sportive glee,
With footsteps flying all wild and free,—
Her brown locks tossed by the passing breeze,
As she shook the mellowed fruit from the trees,
Or hunted the red pinks on the hill,
Or violets that bloomed by the meadow-rill,
Or bounded with white feet through the stream
Where pebbles lay in the silvery gleam.
The lamb by the brookside sporting free
Was not more happy, more pure than she.
But there came a time when worldlings cold
In her young ear whispered, “ You’re growing old,
You must lay your girlish frocks aside,
And put on our robes, so long and wide,—
Must fetter your flowing hair with bands,
And shelter in gloves your dimpled hands ;
Must hide, with blushes, the frank young face,
And learn to move with more studied grace ;
Must sit no more on the tutor’s knee,
Or dare with Willie and Frank be free—
Remember, you’re ’most a woman now !”
How the dark cloud fell on the fair child-brow !

Suspicion and doubt, like the frost in June,
Were withering life's roses all too soon.
I thought to myself, as I stripped away,
So custom is chilling us every day!

I took up another, a throb of pain
Shot through my heart, and athwart my brain.
I saw my restless and fearless child,
Standing erect on the steed so wild,
Joyously tossing his arms about
Toward his playmates, with cheer and shout,—
While I cried in terror, "Ah! have a care!"—
A shriek of anguish came on the air,—
My heart beat wildly, my eyes grew dim,
As they bore him in, with a broken limb.
But I said to my quivering nerves, "Be strong,
With a patience that waiteth and watcheth long."
For the mother's heart must never fail,
Though her eye grow dim, and her cheek grow pale;
But love and duty must nerve her on,
Till the task be finished, the life-work done!

My boy got well, and that broken limb
Proved a teacher of wisdom and good to him—
For he learned that Pleasure's treacherous steed
Must be controlled in its onward speed,

Lest it fly the track on the Course of Life,
And plunge its rider in pain and strife.
Long years have passed since that trying hour,
The shattered arm has regained its power,
And the sturdy frame, and spirit true,
Have the nerve to dare, and the strength to do,
Nor shrink they ever by day or night,
When Conscience directs to the way of Right.
Ah, ha! these garments, worn thin all o'er,
Are of memories good, and of bad, the store;
Every patch and seam is marked with fun,
Some comical word, or some action done
By a waggish wight, whose laughing eye
Danced wildly when merry thoughts went by.
He never—not he—was a bit to blame—
His tongue the ready excuse could frame.
He “Could not tell,—it was very queer,
How that sleigh upset in the moonlight clear—
The horse, he took such a sudden sheer!”
And then how he pitied the shivering girls,
And shook the snow from their tangled curls,
And patted their cheeks, and wondered when
The like of it would happen again!
My boy,—my boy! may his merry mood
Ne'er turn him aside from the highest Good.

May his heart grow better as time wears on,
And he learn all mischief that harms, to shun;
So the mirthful spirit shall cheer us still,
As we tremblingly pass adown life's hill.

And now comes a coat that covered the breast
Of my eldest boy, in his youth's unrest,
When the world to him was as bright and new
As a morning-glory begemmed with dew,
And he could not dream that a life of care
Could blacken with shadows a thing so fair!
But as years rolled on his coat grew small,
And he stood in his manhood proud and tall,
Outgrew the pleasures of childhood's day,
And cast the sports of his youth away,—
Went forth in the world to its toil and strife,
And learned through trials the ways of life.
He saw its selfishness, pride, and wrong,
The weak borne down by the great and strong,
Saw Sin and Shame in holiday dress,
While Virtue languished in dire distress,
And the World with a cold, stern gaze, passed by.
He learned to cavil, to doubt, and sigh.
Could it be that the Father of ail, above,
Would permit such wrong, if his "Name is Love"?

His hopes, like his coat, seemed worn and old,—
And I wept, for the heart of my boy, grown cold.
I could not bear that a cloud should dim
Thus early, the opening day for him.

Then comes a dress of such brilliant dyes,
They might have been borrowed from rainbow skies ;
Not evanescent as those, it is true,
The more these were worn, the brighter they grew,—
Like the heart that throbbed in the fairy form,
With a stronger beat for each passing storm,
More kind and cheerful each added day,
And tinting her duties with love alway.
Oh ! may her life be as beauteous still,
As she climbs the top of its ev'ntide hill,
May the glow of its sunshine fall as light,
The days of its pleasure as warmly and bright—
As fadeless the hues of her happiness be,
As the rainbow tints that lie on my knee !

Next comes an old cloak that the "Gude man" wore
When I saw him first at my father's door.
It has shielded for thirty years his form
From the chilling wind, and the pelting storm.
Its lining was by his mother spun,
Long, long ago,—but her work is done,

Her thread is ended. She sank to rest,
Blest by the many whom she had blest.
And the cloak in service grew old and worn,
Its folds were faded, its skirts were torn,
It was thrown aside, long time ago,
As out of date,—like some men I know !
And only brought out to shield and guard,
When storms were threat'ning, or gales blew hard.
But 'twas far more useful amid life's cares,
Than your showy, costly, but transient wares—
For storm could not change, nor wind, nor rain,
Impress on its rare old fabric a stain ;
It came from the conflict as good and true,
And as warm, perchance, as when bright and new.

And now, like Old Time, I'm clipping away
All thy useless portions, old Garment, to-day.
The bright and the choice that is left I will blend
In my useful web,—Thou faithful old Friend !
Morn, noon, and night, our eyes Thou shalt cheer,
And we'll fancy good spirits are hovering near
To guide our blind footsteps in pathways of Light
That lead to the Dawning that knoweth no night !
And oh ! may thy fate, old cloak ! be mine,
“Good for something” to be, to life's decline,

No matter how broken, how worn, or how old,
May I have still the power to warm the cold
To shelter the way-worn, to cheer the sad,
Bid the drooping and weary heart be glad.
And when on the Earth I can do no more,
When my tasks are ended, my journey o'er,
May I peacefully pass to the Mansions above,
And my thoughts, like these shreds, guard the forms I
love!



LINES

ON THE DEATH OF MRS. FANNIE LORING GAGE, AUGUST 5, 1859.

GONE, gone!—oh! can it be,
That she whom we so lately learned to love,
To the All-Father, in the heaven above,
Has passed, with spirit free?

Gone, gone!—the dutiful—
And we no more shall see her smiling face,
Or hear her voice, or watch her quiet grace,
So gently beautiful.

Gone, gone!—her voice to cheer
 No more will sound within the new-found home
 Its welcome, when the weary one shall come
 To meet his wife so dear.

Gone, gone!—the tender hand
 No more shall soothe the troubled, aching brow;
 Letting in sunshine on the gloomy *Now*,
 With cheering hopes and bland.

Gone, gone!—from this our world.
 We cannot see her; but we feel and know
 That near her loved ones, while they're here below,
 Her wings will be unfurled.

Gone, gone!—no, no, not gone:
 Though the frail body to its perishing
 Has passed, her spirit still is cherishing
 The grieved and lonely one.

Come from thy home above,
 Spirit of beauty—such I know thou art—
 Nestle thee closely to his bleeding heart,
 And soothe him with thy love.

Teach him to feel and know,
 How much to thee in thy new home is given;
 Keep his heart holy for its place in heaven,
 When done with life below.

Death, death ! how strange art thou !
With the same icy fingers thou dost ope
The gates of heaven, that crush out earthly hope
From the life loving now.



OUR BABY

DID you ever see our baby ?
 Little Tot ;
With her eyes so sparkling bright,
And her skin so lily white,
Lips and cheeks of rosy light—
 Tell you what ;
She is just the sweetest baby
 In the lot.

Ah ! she is our only darling ;
 And to me,
All her little ways are witty ;
When she sings her little ditty,
Every word is just as pretty
 As can be—
Not another in the city
 Sweet as she.

You don't think so—you ne'er saw her !

Wish you could

See her with her playthings clattering,

Hear her little tongue a chattering,

Little dancing feet come pattering—

Think you would

Love her just as well as I do,

If you should.

Every grandma's only darling,

I suppose,

Is as sweet and bright a blossom ;

Is a treasure to her bosom,

As cheering and enduring

As my rose.

Heavenly Father, spare them to us

Till life's close.

IMPROMPTU.

TO A FRIEND, WHO SHOWED ME A PICTURE, AND ASKED ME IF I KNEW IT—THE
RESIDENCE OF G. W. BARKER, UNION, WASHINGTON COUNTY, OHIO.

Do I know it?—do I know it?—

Does the birdling know her nest?

Does the true heart know its mother

Or its sister, or its brother,

Or the places of its rest?

Do I know that neat-set picket

Round the door-yard, snowy white;

Or that boy beside the wicket;

Or that well-grown cedar thicket,

Basking in the summer light?

Do I know that grand old fir-tree,

Stretching upward evermore,

Telling of a sire departed—

Of a mother gentle-hearted,

In the happy days of yore?

Do I know the group that's standing

By the door stone, old and gray?

Do I know that stately dwelling?
(Now my heart is swelling, swelling,
And the tears are upward welling
For the loved ones far away).

Do I know that neat log cabin,
Near the pear-tree? Well I know:
There I picked the fleece in May days;
Spun the rolls in summer play days;
Turn'd the cheese in autumn hey-days,
In the merry long ago.

Yes, I know it!—well I know it—
Tears of memory fall yet free—
That old homestead of my childhood,
By the hillside and the wild-wood,
Is earth's dearest spot to me.



SOUNDS OF INDUSTRY.

I LOVE the clanging of the hammer,
The whirring of the plane,
The crashing of the busy saw
The creaking of the crane;

The ringing of the anvil,
The grating of the drill,
The clatt'ring of the turning-lathe—
The whirring of the mill;
The buzzing of the spindle, too,
The rattling of the loom,
The quick puff of the engine,
The fan's continuous boom;
The clipping of the tailor's shears,
The driving of the awl;
These sounds of active industry,
I love,—I love them all!

I love the plowman's whistle,
The reaper's cheerful song,
The drover's oft-repeated shout,
Spurring his stock along.
The bustle of the market-man,
As he hies him to the town;
The gay "halloo" from the tree-top
As the ripe fruit cometh down!
The busy sound of threshers
Cleaning out the golden grain;
The husker's joke and merry mirth,
Upon the moonlit plain;
The kind voice of the dairyman,
The shepherd's gentle call;

These sounds of active industry
I love, I love them all !

The rumbling of the washboard,
The splashing of the churn,
The sputt'ring of the cooking stove,
The hissing of the urn ;
The thimble, needle, tinkling—
The brushing of the broom,
The flutterings of the duster
About the well-aired room ;
And the voices of the children
As with mirthfulness they come,
Shedding the light of innocence
Upon the happy home ;
The song of love and sympathy
In cottage or in hall ;
These sounds of cheerful labor,
I love, I love them all !

For they tell my list'ning spirit
Of the earnestness of life ;
How much of all its pleasure
Cometh of toil and strife ;
Not the toil or strife which fainteth,
And murmureth by the way ;

Not the toil or strife which groaneth
 Beneath a tyrant's sway ;
Not that toil or strife which gropeth
 All selfishly along,
Giving out no ray of sunshine,
 Taking in no joy of song ;
But the toil that ever springeth
 From a free and willing heart,—
The strife that ever bringeth
 To the toiler nobler part.

Oh ! there's joy and good in labor,
 If we labor but aright ;
Giving vigor to the daytime,
 And sweeter sleep at night ;
A good that bringeth pleasure
 Ev'n to the toiling hours,
For Duty cheers the spirit
 As the dew revives the flowers ;
Giving strength and hope in sorrow,
 Driving clouds and storms away ;
Making sunshine for the morrow
 From the darkness of to-day.

Say it not, that our good Father
 Bade us labor as a doom.

No, it is his richest mercy
 Meant to sweeten life's dull gloom.
Let us cheer'ly then be doing
 Whatsoe'er we find to do,
With an earnest, willing spirit,
 And a strong hand,—free and true.



THE ARMY OF BUCKETS

FORTH to their labor at early morn—
 There they go;
Stalwart men (who the idlers scorn)—
 All in a row;
Brave as an army of soldiers they,
 With buckets of tin;
Conquering the foe they meet each day,
 A prize they win.

Bloodshed and carnage are not their trade;
 “The battle of life”
They fight—with mattock and axe and spade—
 For children and wife,

Singing the songs that their boyhood knew,
 With a cheerful glee—
Cracking a joke on a comrade true,
 Mischievously.

Each, with his bucket hung by his side
 His dinner within,
Cares not a straw for the glance of pride
 At the humble tin.
The man who, honestly, for himself
 Earns his daily bread,
Is nobler than he who, with borrowed pelf
 Holds a haughty head.

Every stroke from a freeman's hand
 Makes the world better;
Each furrow he turns in the goodly land
 Loosens a fetter.
Better, by far, than the glittering sword,
 Is the bucket of tin,
Back to the *right*, which is the Lord
 The world to win.

Home from their labor, 'tis evening now—
 There they go;
Sturdy men, with the toil-stained brow—
 All in a row.

Sweet be their sleep, when their task is done—
 Comfort and health
Nerve them again, with each rising sun,
 To labor for wealth.

Wealth, that is better than silver or gold,
 And a conscience clear—
Health and strength, with pleasures untold,
 To the toiler here :
Honor and praise to the legions strong,
 With their buckets of tin ;
Nobly they're battling earth's great wrong—
 Gold help them to win.



BEN FISHER.

HOME PICTURES.

No. 1.

BEN FISHER had finished his hard day's work,
 And he sat at his cottage door ;
His good wife Kate sat by his side,
 And the moonlight danced on the floor.

The moonlight danced on the cottage floor
Her beams were as clear and bright
As when he and Kate, twelve years before,
Talked love in her mellow light.

Ben Fisher had never a pipe of clay,
And never a dram drank he,
But loved at home with his wife to stay
When from daily labor free.
A cherub rogue with a rosy smile
On his fatherly knee found rest.
And merrily chatted they on, the while
Kate's babe slept on her breast.

Ben told how fast his potatoes grew,
And the corn in the lower field ;
That the wheat on the hill was yellow turned,
And promised a glorious yield.
A glorious yield in the harvest time—
And his orchard was doing fair,
His sheep and his stock were in their prime,
His farm in good repair.

Kate said her garden looked beautiful ;
The fowls and the calves were fat ;
The butter Tommy this morning churned,
Would buy him a Sunday hat.

That Jenny for Papa a shirt had made—
 'Twas made, too, "by the rule,"—
That Neddy the garden could nicely spade,
 And Ann was "the head" at school.

Ben slowly passed his toil-worn hand
 Through his locks of gray and brown.
"I tell you, Kate, what *I* think," said he,
 "*We're the happiest folks in town.*"
"I know," said Kate, "that we all work hard,
 Work and health are friends, I've found,—
There's Mrs. Bell does not work at all,
 And she's sick the whole year round.

"They're worth their thousands, so people say,
 I ne'er saw them happy yet.
'Twould not be me that would take their wealth,
 And live in a constant fret.
My humble home has a light within,
 Mrs. Bell's gold could not buy;
Six healthy children, a merry heart,
 And a husband's love-lit eye!"

I fancied a tear was in Ben's eye—
 The moon shone out still clearer—
I could not tell why the man should cry,
 But he drew to Kate yet nearer.

He leaned his head on her shoulder there,
And took her hand in his.
I guess,—though I looked at the moon just then,—
He left on her lips—a kiss.



BEN FISHER.

No. 2.

BEN FISHER had finished his harvesting,
And he stood by his garden gate,
One foot on the rail, and one on the ground,
As he called to his good wife Kate.
There were stains of toil on his wamus red,
The dust of the field on his hat;
But a twinkle of pleasure was in his eye,
As he looked at his stock so fat!

“ Here, give me the babe, dear Kate! you are tired,
And I fear you have too much care.
You must rest, and pick up a little, I think,
Before we can go to the fair.

I'd hate to be taking fat cattle, you know,
Fat hogs, fat sheep, and fat cows,
With a wife at my elbow as poor as a crow
And care-wrinkles seaming her brows.

“‘Can't go!’ Why not? ‘Can't afford the expense?’

I know, Kate! our crops arn't the best;
But we've labored together to keep things along,
And together we'll now take a rest.
The frost blighted the fruit, but ‘Brindle’ is prime,
And ‘Jinny’ and ‘Fan’ are a show.
Your butter and cheese can't be beat in the State;
So up to the fair we will go!

“You've ne'er seen a city, and Cleveland is fine;

Never seen the blue, billowy lake;
Ne'er rode in a rail-car, nor been in a throng—
So, Kate, this short journey we'll take;
And gather new feelings, new thoughts, and new ways,
If we find those that suit, as we roam,
And garner up strength in head, heart, and hand
For the loves, and the duties of home.

“I sometimes have thought, as I plodded along

For months, o'er the same weary round,
That another who had such a *real hard time*,
In Ohio could nowhere be found.

But when I've been called from my home for awhile,
And seen how the world gets along,
I've come back to toil with a light, cheerful heart,
And,—‘There's no place like home,’ for my song.

“I wonder that *mothers* don't wholly despair,
Who ne'er from their cares get away,
But walk the same tread-wheel of duty, for years,
Scarce stopping to rest, night or day.
No wonder they grow discontented, sometimes,
Their feelings get raspy and cold ;
For toil never ending, and labor uncheered,
Make women,—and men *sometimes*—scold.”

Kate looked up with a smile, and said, “Ben, we will
go ;

There may be stock fatter than ours,
Horses swifter of foot, cows finer by far,
Better butter and cheese, fruit, and flowers ;
But there's *one thing* I claim, that can't be surpassed
In the whole Yankee nation to-day,—
I would not exchange for ‘a kingdom to boot’—
That's *my ‘gude man!’*”—and Kate ran away.

BEN FISHER.

No. 3.

BEN FISHER had come from the great State Fair,
And put down his trunk on the floor ;
Brushed the dust from his pants and his Sunday coat,
And hung up his hat by the door.
“ And how are the children ? ” asked Kate, in her haste,
Ere her bonnet was off, or untied.
“ Where’s my darling pet, and how are you all ? ”
“ All *first rate*, ” they quickly replied.
“ I’m so glad to get home, arn’t you ? ” asked Kate.
“ Well, I am, ” said Ben, with glee ;
And he clapped his hands with a father’s pride,
As the children rushed to his knee.
They’ve come ! They’ve come ! ” was the noisy shout,
That made the whole house ring.
And, mingled with kisses, and welcomes home,
Was,—“ Mother, what did you bring ? ”
Kate folded them all to her loving breast,
While the tears stood in her eye ;

As she thanked *the Father*,—and softly said,

“Wait, I’ll show you, by-and-by.”

“You are hungry and tired, I know,” said Jane ;

“But I’ve half a mind to scold,

For dinner was ready two hours ago,

And everything now is cold.”

“Never mind, it will taste as good, dear Jane,

As if it were in its prime.

We’re hungry, and tired,—no mistake ;

But we’ve had such a glorious time !

Tell you what I’ve seen ? To be sure I will ;

But ’twill take me a good long year,

To mention one-half the curious things—

Let us go to our dinner, my dear.”

“No, Tom ! our Lilly did *not* take the prize.

Ah ! the cattle and stock were so grand !

But cheer up, my boy ! we’ll beat them next year,

As easy as turning our hand.

We shall need to improve our hogs and our sheep,—

(Why, Jane, your cold dinner is fine !)

Those premium horses ? Ah, well, never mind,

I’ll tell you at some other time.”

“Oh ! girls, how I wished you all were along,”

Said Kate, “at the grand Floral Hall.

Oh! the beautiful things at every turn,
I wish you had seen them all.
The hanging wreaths, and the singing birds,
The fruits, and the brilliant flowers,
And all those beautiful pictures, too—
I could have looked on for hours.

“I have seen and heard, and thought of so much,
And learned so much that is new;
That, since you're well, I'm glad that I went
To the fair of fifty-two.
And now let us strive all to do our best,
And improve with an earnest care,
And our Jane, and Mary, and Tom, and Ned,
Shall go to the next State Fair.

“To be sure we were crowded and jostled about,
But nobody seemed to mind;
For the few did not dare to scold and pout
Where others were cheerful and kind.
And many a lesson, I hope, was learned
By the masses who gathered there,
To give to life's labor a brighter thought,
And to soften its wearing care.”

BEN FISHER.

No. 4.

BEN FISHER had finished his autumn work,
His crops were all gathered in.
His hay in the mow, his corn in the crib,
His potatoes snug in the bin.
The wool long ago to market had gone,
His fruit floated down on the tide,
His butter and cheese, his beeves and his hogs
Gone off on a railroad ride.

Kate had woven her flannel nice and strong,
And a warm suit all round was done—
The apple-butter and pickles were made,
And the stocking-yarn all was spun,
Her blankets were soft and white as the snow,
Her carpets of brilliancy rare;
Not a sombre line, nor a deadened hue,
Mocked her housewifely skill and care.

'Twas Thanksgiving Day, and as the shades
Of the evening began to fall,

Our old friend Ben, and his good wife Kate,
With their children large and small,
Were gathered around the generous hearth
To sing a sweet evening hymn;—
Ah! the light that glanced from their cheerful eyes
Made the hickory's blaze look dim.

For who does not know that labor and love,
If we labor and love aright,
Give the cheek and the lip a deeper glow,
And the eye a purer light;
To the footstep a more elastic spring,
To the heart a richer wealth,
To the mind a broader and higher aim,
To the whole life,—hope and health?

They were blest, for their home was all their own
And the wretched had shared their store,
Not a suffering soul had gone uncheered
From their hospitable door,
Not one treasured string of that household harp
Had been broken or lost its tone;
Not a vacant seat made the mother weep,
And the father inly moan.

No shadow of sin, or shame, or wrong,
Had clouded one sunny young brow;

No discontented or murmuring thought
Was marring their pleasure now.
Their hearts breathed forth an informal prayer,
Without a doubt or a fear;
They had *lived out* their hearts' deep gratitude
To the Father through all the year.

Ye, who in inglorious idleness
Squander life's best hours away,
Know ye not, that 'tis mockery for *you*
To lift your hands and pray?
For He, who marketh the sparrow's fall,
And dresses the lily in pride,
Heeds not the formal prayer of those
Who His holy laws deride.

But they, who labor from day to day
In dutiful hope and love,
Who smooth and soften life's rugged way,
Reflecting each ray from above;
They, who with unwavering faith and trust
Have improved each talent given;
May lift their hands with unshrinking hearts,
And a blessing ask from Heaven.

MUTUAL DEPENDENCE.

I LOVE the worn hand and the honest bronzed face,
If the wear and the bronze come of cheerful free toil.
And I never yet thought a grimmed shirt a disgrace,
If by glad useful labor it gathered its soil.

The weather-worn farmer, who brings me his store,
Finds ever a welcome as free at my board,
As I'd give to a father or brother; and more,—
I am proud, for I feel that I dine with a "lord!"

The cheerful mechanic, loud whistling who comes,
With his hammer, his nails, his chisel and planes,
To aid the convenience and comfort of home;
Oh! how can we thank him enough for his pains?

The shoemaker, beating St. Crispin's old song
May claim from us all both a smile and a nod.
Let us join in the chorus and help him along,—
While our children dance round us all cozily shod.

Each worker on earth, be his trade what it may,
Still adds to our comfort in one way or other.
Not a step do we take o'er life's varying way;
But our hearts should accept him as helper and brother!

And dear working sisters. Ah! what should we do
If they did not cheerfully lighten our care!
Our pleasures in life would be but too few,
Without them, its labors and trials to share.

Each moment we live, in peace or in strife,
We lean on each other for comfort and aid;
And no one will fight well the "battle of life,"
Who pauses to pine, or to blush at his trade.

The strong, honest heart makes the man after all!
Not genius, nor bank-stocks, nor houses, and lands.
And he is the richest, whatever befalls,
Who can, with most wisdom, use head, heart, and
hands!

Then let us not sigh when the drones saunter past
In broadcloths and silks, should they sneeringly flout
us,—
They'll have to acknowledge us masters at last,
By asking our help—for they can't live without us!

THE MAIDEN'S CHOICE

OH ! give me the life of a farmer's wife,
In the fields and woods so bright,
'Mong the singing birds and the lowing herds,
And the clover blossoms white.
The note of the morning's heavenward lark
Is the music sweet for me ;
And the dewy flowers in the early hours,
The gems I love to see !

Oh ! give me the breeze from the waving trees,
The murmur of summer leaves ;
And the swallow's song as he skims along
Or twitters beneath the eaves ;
The plowman's shout, as he's turning out
His team, at set of sun,
Or his merry "good night," by the firefly's light
When his daily work is done.

And give me the root and the luscious fruit,
My own hands rear for food ;
And the bread so light, and honey white,
And the milk so pure and good !

For sweet the bread of labor is,
When the heart is strong and true,
And a blessing will come to the hearth and home,
If our best we bravely do.



THE OLD STEAM MILL.

PUFF, puff—puff, puff!
Goes the old steam mill;
Grinding away, night and day,
Down under the hill.
Grinding away, night and day,
Making the bread for the poor,
Sending a blessing, every hour,
To the proud or the humble door.

Puff, puff—puff, puff!
I step to its cheerful sound,
And hum my song, and jog along,
To its ceaseless beat and bound.
The banks may fail, but *it* will not quail
One breath of its iron will,—
And the cry “hard times” seems idle rhymes—
It works but the cheaper still.

Puff, puff—puff, puff!

So beats the true heart on ;
Stopping to play, neither night nor day,
Till its life work all is done.
Like the old mill, grinding still,
Something for rich and poor ;
Doing its best, making earth blest,
With its good deeds, evermore !

Work, work—work, work !

Is the brave heart's song ;
Work while you may, night and day,
With a will all brave and strong.
Looking about, and finding out
What most needs to be done,—
At it then cheerily, lagging not wearily,
Work, till the work be done !



DON'T GO TO CALIFORNIA.

Don't go to California, boys,
Don't go to Oregon !
There's wealth for you in the Buckeye State,
And wealth that may be won.

Ay! wealth that may be won, boys,
By true hearts strong and bold,—
Then don't go to California,
Stay at home and gather gold.
Oh! stay at home, oh! stay at home
With the friends you love to-day,
There's wealth for you in the Buckeye State,
Oh! gather it while you may!

There's wealth in the teeming valleys,
Deep buried in the soil,
To work! to work! with spade and plow,
And win with manly toil.
There's wealth in the fleecy flocks, boys,—
That sleep in the shady grove;
There's wealth in the lowing herds, boys,
That over our wild hills rove.
Then stay at home, oh! stay at home
With the friends you love to-day,
There's wealth for you in the flocks and herds,—
Oh! gather it while you may.

There's wealth in the dark old forests,
'Mong the oaks and poplars tall;
Go! gather it while you've health and strength,
With the axe, the wedge, and mall.

Oh ! there's wealth in the waving saplings,
There's wealth in the osier bough,
And a fairy's wand, with generous hand,
Is coining it for you now.

Then stay at home, oh ! stay at home
With the friends you love to-day,
There's wealth for you in the forest, boys,
Oh ! gather it while you may.

There's wealth in the craggy hillsides ;
The rocks hold gold in store,
And the tireless hand may win it
From the deep-laid beds of ore.
Not beds of the "precious metals ;"
But an ore more "useful" far,
That maketh the ponderous engine,
And rails for the flying car.
Then stay at home, oh ! stay at home
With the friends you love to-day,
There's wealth in our rocks and hillsides,—
Stay ! gather it while you may.

There's wealth in the wild ravines, boys,
There's wealth in the sandy dells ;
There's wealth in the meadows green, boys,
There's wealth in the mossy fells ;

There's wealth in the bounding brooks, boys
That sparkle along our hills ;
There's wealth in our sweeping rivers ;
There's wealth in our dancing rills.
Then stay at home, oh ! stay at home
With the friends you love to-day, .
There's gold in our dancing rills, boys,
Oh ! gather it while you may.

There's wealth in the wintry winds, boys,
There's wealth in the summer showers ;
There's wealth in the springing grass-blade,
There's wealth in the budding flowers ;
There's wealth in the glorious sunshine,
There's wealth in the falling dew,
And every breeze that quivers the trees
Is garnering wealth for you.
Then stay at home, oh ! stay at home
'Mong friends you love to-day,
There's wealth in the dew and sunshine,
Oh ! gather it while you may.

Oh ! gather it while you may, boys,
With the plow, the hoe, the spade ;
With the mattock, the pick, and crowbar
The axe with its glancing blade ;—

The sledge, the tongs, and the anvil,
The hammer, the saw, the plane,—
With sickle and scythe, with auger and drill,—
Gather wealth from hill and plain.
Oh! stay at home, oh! stay at home
With hearts that love to-day,
There's gold for you in Ohio;
Oh! gather it while you may.

Oh! go not to California, boys,
The glittering trash to find,
There's a world of wealth, gold cannot buy,
In the homes you leave behind!
There's wealth in the maiden's trusting love;
There's wealth in the wife's fond fears,
There's wealth in a sister's tenderness,
There's wealth in a mother's tears.
Then stay at home, oh! stay at home,
Enjoy it while you may;
For the gold in California,
Don't barter life's loves away!

DON'T RUN IN DEBT.

Don't run in debt ! never mind, never mind !

If the old clothes are faded and torn ;

Patch them up, make them do,—it is better by far

Than to have *the heart* troubled and worn.

There's no comfort, be sure, in walking the street

In fine clothes, if you are in debt,

And feeling a fear that the next man you meet

Will whisper, "They're not paid for yet."

Good friends, let me beg of you, don't run in debt !

If the chairs and the sofas are old,

They will suit you much better than any new set,

Unless they've been paid for in gold.

Is the house far too small ? Draw closer together ;

Keep it right, with a hearty good will ;

A large one unpaid for, in all kinds of weather

Will be giving the warm heart a chill.

Don't run in debt ! Girls and boys, take a hint—

If the fashions *have* changed since last season,

Miss Summer is out in her very same tint,

And Dame Nature has both taste and reason.

Just say to your friends that you cannot find time
To keep up with follies and fashions ;
Your purse is too light, and your honor too prime
To be wasted on such silly passions.

Husbands, don't run in debt ! let friends, if they can,
Have fine houses, fine horses, fine flowers ;
But, unless you can pay for, be more of a man,
Than to envy their sunshiny hours.
If you've money to spare, I have nothing to say—
Spend your dollars and dimes as you please ;
But, mind you ! a man who his note cannot pay
Is a man who is never at ease !

Don't run in debt ! Strive to pay the old score ;
'Twill fill all your days full of sorrow,
To know that the sheriff may call at the door,
With a bill you can't settle to-morrow.
Now take my advice,—it's both honest and true.
(But lest you may some of you doubt it,
I'll whisper a secret, "now seeing it's you—"
I've tried it, and know all about it !)

The chains of a debtor are hard and are cold,
The links all corrosion and rust—
Gild them over and over, they still are not gold ;
Then avoid them with fear and disgust.

The man who's in debt, is a pitiful slave,
Though his heart may be honest and true.
If you'd hold up your heads,—be free and be brave,
With no notes, or old claims falling due.

Then the frost cannot break you, the midge can't destroy,
You can live without apples or pears,
And eat your corn dodgers with peace and with joy,
And laugh at the world's carking cares.
“Owe no man anything, but love to each other,”
Was the wholesome advice of St. Paul;
Had we kept the command, my good sister and brother
We'd ne'er had a “panic” at all.



ON FIRST BEHOLDING THE OCEAN.

O GRAND and glorious Ocean !
We have shaken hands at last ;
My eyes have seen the real
Of my dreaming in the past :
For all along life's wayside,
For fifty years or more,
I have heard of all thy grandeur,
Of thy waves, and dash, and roar.

And now I see thy breakers,
 Marching onward, like a band
Of bold and fearless warriors,
 In their progress, strong, and grand !
I see thy white caps dashing
 In their fury at my side ;
I hear the voice of Ages,
 Breaking round me in its pride !

I bend my ear to listen,
 As I did in days of yore,
To catch thy solemn surging
 In the old shell by the door ;
In that old shell of my father,
 By the porch-door in the wild,
Where he told me of the ocean,
 When I was but a child.

I bend my ear to listen
 For the sailor's cheerful song,
Mingling with the roar of waters.
 As they roll and flash along.
I dip my hands in rapture
 In the salt waves at my feet ;
I seem to feel His spirit
 In their ceaseless bound and beat !

Oh! old Ocean, grand and glorious!
 I have longed so for this hour,
 To look upon thy vastness,
 To see thy strength and power!
 Thou weav'st a chain of mem'ries,
 Linking all the paths I've trod,
 With thy ceaseless voice of ages—
 Now I see the power of God!



LINES

WRITTEN ON THE ISLAND OF ST. DOMINGO, AT TWILIGHT,—1859

THE sun has sunk in his glory,
 And twilight shadows come
 To this ruin, old and hoary,—
 To me come thoughts of home!
 Away o'er the rolling billow,
 My feet are wandering free;
 But, where'er my head I pillow,
 My thoughts go over the sea!

To the loves I've left behind me;
 To friends I've cherished long;

To a thousand ties that bind me,
 With tendrils true and strong ;
 And still, as hours go fleeting,
 Each nearer brings to me
 The hour of that blissful meeting,
 With loved ones over the sea !

In this lovely Isle, where summer
 And flowers fill all the year,
 'Tis strange that lips should murmur,
 Or eyes should drop a tear ;
 But give me the snow-capp'd mountain,
 The Frost King, wild and free,
 And the ice-bejeweled fountain,
 With loved ones over the sea !

Here's a sigh for the loving-hearted,
 A prayer for friends at home,
 A tear for the years departed,
 A hope for years to come !
 Away, o'er the rolling billow,
 My feet are wandering free !
 But where'er my head I pillow,
 My heart goes over the sea !

THE SOUND OF THE SHELL.

THERE's a legend of old, that a strange story tells
Of the sound of the sea that is heard in its shells.
Though for thousands of miles they are borne from its
shore,

Place your ear to their cells, you shall still hear the roar
Of the wave that in infancy rocked them to sleep
In the pearly-gemmed cave of the wind-cradled deep.

So the heart of the wand'rer, far though he roam,
Bears hidden within it sweet echoes of Home,
That through all the life long may ever he heard
In the thrill of a tone, in a glance or a word,
Which another as truthful may feel, and may prove,
As thought answers to thought, in the circles of love.

New friendships may bind us, new loves lay their claim,
New homes may enshrine us—they're never the same;
But the home we first knew, on this beautiful earth,
The friends of our childhood, the place of our birth,
In the heart's inner chambers, sung always will be
As the shell ever sings, of its home in the sea.

"THE RAIN UPON THE ROOF."*

LONG ago, a poet dreaming,—
 Weaving fancy's warp and woof,—
 Penned a tender, soothing poem,
 Call'd the "Rain upon the roof."

Once I read it, and its beauty
 Filled my heart with mem'ries sweet;
 Days of childhood flitted round me,
 Violets sprang beneath my feet;
 And my gentle, loving mother,
 Spoke again in accents mild,
 Curbing every wayward passion
 Of her happy, thoughtless child.
 Then I heard the swallows twitt'ring
 Underneath the cabin eaves,
 And the laughing shout of Willie,
 Up among the maple leaves.
 Then I blessed the poet's dreaming,
 Blessed his fancy, warp and woof;

* By Coates Kinney.

And I wept o'er mem'ries treasured
As the rain fell on the roof.

Years ago I loved the poem,
But its sweetness lingers still;
As the freshness in the valley
Marks where flowed the spring-time rill.
Lost to eye,—but not to spirit,
For the raindrop never falls
O'er my head, with pattering music,
But it peoples mem'ry's halls,
With the old familiar faces,
Loved and treasured long ago;
Treasured now as in Life's youth-time,
For *my heart* no change can know.
Then I live again my childhood
In the home far, far away!
Roam the woodland, orchard, wild-wood,
With my mates again at play.
Then my gray hairs press the pillow,
Holding all the world aloof,—
Dreaming sweetly, as I listen
To "the rain upon the roof."

Every pattering drop that falleth
Seemeth like an angel's tread,

Bringing messages of mercy
To the weary heart and head ;
Pleasant thoughts of years departed,
Pleasant soothings for to-day,
Earnest longings for to-morrow,
Hopings for the far away !
For I know each drop that falleth
Comes to bless the thirsty earth,
Making seed to bud and blossom,
Starting all things into birth—
As the radiant bow, that scattereth
All our faithlessness, with proof
Of a seed-time and a harvest,—
So “the rain upon the roof.”



AUTUMN DAYS IN SOUTH CAROLINA.

“THE MELANCHOLY DAYS HAVE COME, THE SADDEST OF THE YEAR.”

BRYANT.

THE cool autumnal days have come, the brightest of the
year ;
They bring no gloom to southern lands, no frost to blight
and sear.

The fierce, hot suns of summer days, with all their train
of ills,

Are past, and still the mocking-bird its wildest carol trills.

The live oak wears its brightest green within its veil of
gray ;

The wren and sparrow flit and sing as merry as 'twere
May ;

The acorns' fall, like pattering rain, through all the hours
keeps time

To twittering loves, and lulls the ear like some old
mystic rhyme.

Down in the vale the laborer sings, "O Lord ! remember
we,"*

While gathering in the precious crop, like white foam of
the sea.

Upon its snowy heaps are found no blood-stains, black
and grim ;

The dark hand labors cheerily, God has remembered him.

The roses of the May put forth their beauty as 'twere
spring ;

The hollies, from their garnered stores, fresh scarlet
drapery bring ;

* A favorite song of the negroes.

The golden Mayflower o'er the sands spreads out its
 mantle bright,
And feathery grasses nod their joy where curlews wing
 their flight.

The orioles fly the frosty north, and in the Yupon rest ;
Unmindful of October winds, they fearless build their nest ;
While from the broad magnolia's stem the blue-jay plucks
 the seed,
And cries discordant thanks to Him who answers thus
 his need.

The timid rabbit from the hedge springs out without a
 dread ;
The sportsman hears no rustling leaves, to tell him of its
 tread ;
The soft winds sigh among the pines, and whisper in the
 dells,
And woo to life with gentlest touch the heather's purple
 bells.

Upon the leaves the pure dew falls, the grass springs
 'neath the feet,
And from October's kissing sun the orange gathers sweet,
The oleander blooms afresh, while free hands break the
 corn,
And song and laughter close the day where Ceres fills
 her horn.

The waves come dancing to the shore, like maidens in
their glee,

And play upon the whitened sand their sweetest minstrelsy.

Oh, sunny South ! where winter days are bright as northern
June,

Where nature touches golden harps, through all the year
in tune !

'Tis sad to think that war has spread its pall o'er all thy
lands,

That thy sweet flowers so long were plucked by trait'rous
tyrant hands ;

That birds should hush their cheery notes, scared by the
cannon's roar,

Death-freighted, carrying sounds of woe to every island
shore.

Oh, sunny South ! so long accursed with slavery's cruel
ruth,

Was that the winter of thy years ? Will war renew thy
youth ?

Its shock hath broke the bondman's chain, as sunshine
frees the rills,

And rolls the spring-time flood of joy adown our northern
hills.

And now its withering days are past, and treason's work
is done,
Lo! every slave a freeman stands, to shout the victory
won.

Oh, sunny South! will not these days be by the poets
sung,
And thousand harps to sing thy praise in numbers sweet
be strung?
And thou shalt teach us of that land, through all life's
care-worn hours,
Where we shall meet the loved and lost among perpetual
flowers;
Where wrong no more shall wring the cry of agony and
fear,
From hearts oppressed, but truth and love make spring
through all the year.

MY MARY.

THERE'S a cot on the banks of Muskingum's bright waters,
Beneath the tall shade of the sycamore-tree,
Where the sweetest and fairest of old Morgan's daughters,
Sings sweetly her song in the moonlight to me.
Her cheek is as fresh as the rosebud, and lighter
Her step than the fawn's, as she skips through the dale;
The star of the eve is not clearer or brighter
Than the eye of my Mary who lives in the vale.

Oh! sweet is the song of the lark or canary—
Their notes are all cheerfulness, music and glee,
But sweeter by far is the voice of my Mary,
As sweetly she sings in the moonlight to me.
The worldling may boast of his gold and his pleasures,
And breathe in my ear all his flattering tale,
The choicest, and purest, and fairest of treasures
Is the heart of my Mary who lives in the vale.

When the wild storms of life put my heart in commotion,
And 'tis tossed to and fro like the waves of the sea,
The voice of my Mary stills every emotion,
As sweetly she sings in the moonlight to me.

Her spirit is kind as the clouds of the even,
As gently they fall on the flowers of the dale,
And life will to me be a foretaste of heaven,
If spent with my Mary who lives in the vale.



LITTLE HOURS.

WRITTEN THE LAST HOUR OF THE YEAR.

Little hours, with dancing feet,
In the spring-time tripped along,
'Mong the buds and blossoms sweet,
Answering to the wild bird's song—
Oft I begged of them to stay,
Stay a little while with me ;
But they flittered on their way,
Laughing ever merrily

Little hours, when summer came
With more sober, stately grace,
Smiled, amid the harvest home,
As they passed with quickened pace ;

How I longed to hold them still,
While the harvest moon rode high ;
But they answered not my will,
Every one swept strangely by.

Little hours still came and went,
With a graver, sadder look,
When the hues of crimson blent
With the shadows in the brook.
Ripened fruit and rustling corn
Showed how speedily they flew ;
Chilly eve and frosty morn
Took the place of summer's dew.

Now old winter's little hours,
Shod with ice, and crowned with snow
Sweep along the woods and bowers,
Skate above the brooklet's flow ;
Still, with pleading voice, I cry,
" Stay a little, now you're here ;"
But they answer, as they fly,
" Welcome, welcome, the New Year "

Little hours have joined their hands,
And a long, long year have made,
Casting o'er the waiting lands
Summer's sun and winter's shade.

Every one hath done its part,
Marking with a point of steel,
Somewhere on each waiting heart,
Truths, to make it love and feel.

Little hours the soul prepare
For the coming life of bliss,
Where we lose the sin and care,
That have marred the joy of this.
Mortal, use thy godlike powers,
Fill thy life with earnest love
Then long years, for little hours,
Shall be thy award above.



MARY LEE.

“Is there a letter for Mary Lee?”
Asked a sweet voice, beseechingly.
“Never a one,” said the clerk with glee.

“Never a one,” came the words so low,
That I scarcely heard, as she turned to go,
“How could he answer my question so?”

“Never a one!” Her eye grew dim,
And tears fell fast, as she thought of him,
Who had filled her life-cup to its brim.

I thought I heard, in those welling words,
A crushing among life’s quivering chords,
As flowers are crushed by lighting birds.

Then with the clairvoyant’s searching eye,
I saw, as she, sobbing, passed me by,
The blackened scrawl of her destiny.

’Tis an oft-told tale. One holds her vow,
That is far away.—She’s forgotten now,
And falsehood is written upon his brow.

She will come each day to the post-boy free,
Asking for letters for Mary Lee;
And “never a one,” will his answer be,

Till her feet shall fail to seek the door,
And hope in her heart shall dwell no more,
Then the sexton will seal her sorrows o’er.

THE LAST HOUR OF THE YEAR.

HARK! there is a solemn tolling

O'er the earth of spirit bells,
On, in joy or sadness rolling,
To each ear a tale it tells.
Of the past, so full of beauty,
Of the past, so true and strong,
Or the past, so lacking duty,
Or the past, so fraught with wrong.

Of the past, with sorrow clouded,
Of the past of toil and care,
Where, perchance, bright hopes enshrouded
Ring out notes of dark despair.
Or the past where joy and gladness
Rainbowed all the sky above,
Where no requiem of sadness
Marred the harmony and love.

Thus the bells of Time ring ever,
And each heart hears its own strain.
"Lost," they cry, "in gloom forever;"
Or, "'Tis found in hope again."

“Every effort true and earnest
Lives begemmed in Time for aye,
While the false to dust returnest,
Scarce outliving the to-day.”

Then as dying Fifty-seven
Fades forever from the view,
As the sun sinks low at even,
Shall we not the Past review?
Has his stay with thee been cheerful,
Keeping heart and hearth still warm;
Or with sorrows dark and fearful,
Full of cloud and lowering storm?

Has misfortune's angry scowling
Made thee tremble day by day;
Or Hard Times their terrors howling
Frightened Cheerfulness away?
Look within, search out the causes
Which have marred thy onward life,
Thou may'st in Time's solemn pauses
Learn to shun the coming strife.

Look within! If Faith unfailing
Point, with finger bright, the way,
And the Right, enthroned, unquailing,
Still holds undisputed sway

O'er thy heart, thou need'st not tremble,
 Thou hast treasure yet untold,
 Richer than the banks can give thee,
 Purer than the new-coined gold.

Treasure that shall bring thee gladness
 In the coming days of life,
 Making all thy pathway brighter
 Through the past of toil and strife.
 Sorrow cannot banish Pleasure
 From the soul that's pure and just;
 Nor misfortune spoil the treasure
 Which *good angels* hold in trust.



LINES

SUGGESTED BY READING A POEM ENTITLED "THE CONVICT
 TO HIS MOTHER."

I AM a mother, and my heart
 Yearns o'er that fallen one
 As I would have another's yearn
 O'er mine, if fallen son.

And tears, a mother's burning tears,
Flow unrestrained and free ;
Outgushing from a mother's heart,
A mother's sympathy.

When that boy's mother laid her hand
Upon her darling's brow,
And prayed for him with hopeful joy,
She felt as I feel now.
Felt that her child would meet the world
Unscathed by sin and shame,
And bear amid its tempting strife
A pure and stainless name.

And I may live, like her, to see
My sun go down in gloom ;
Ay, live to see my own condemned
To die a felon's doom.
And could I bear ! Oh ! could I live
Through woe so dark and deep !
A thousand times I'd rather lay
My boy in death's cold sleep.

Oh ! every one that bears the name
Of mother, in our land,
Cry, cry aloud with earnest voice,
And lift the warning hand.

Dash from the young and guileless lip
The tempter's poisoned bowl;
'Tis drugged with deepest, blackest crime
That ever cursed the soul.

Are *thine own* pure, and strong, and free,
Hast thou for them no fear?
Then give thy strength to fainter hearts,—
Admonish, aid, and cheer.
And while thy pulse beats high with pride
O'er *thine* unerring one,
Oh! think that every crime-stained man
Has been some mother's son.



LINES

WRITTEN WHILE PASSING THE GREAT ROCKS ON THE
MISSISSIPPI RIVER.

TELL me, ye Grand old Rocks!
Where the winged spirits of the mountains sleep?
They, who amid the shocks
Of jarring elements, ere nature had grown quiet,
While yet Old Chaos o'er the earth ran riot,
Took notes for coming ages?

Ay! I would ask the tale.

What tossed ye up in grandeur lone and high,
Seeking communion with the sky;

Looking down on the vale,

As if in scorn; where the wild Fairies bring
The buds of promise first in early spring,

Strewing with hope earth's pages?

What wore your stern old base

Into these furrows? Did the surging waves
Borrow your sands to fill the mystic graves

Of a departed Race?

Ha! did ye brave Old Ocean's angry swell
In the lost years, so proudly and so well,

That still ye rear your heads aloft to tell

Of his foiled power?

Or was it that great flood,

The records tell of, which in ancient times
Deluged the earth, for mortal sins and crimes,

All, save old Noah and his household gods?

Did ye hear aught, old Rock, of that dread strife?

Climbed no one to thy top in hope of life,

In that strange hour?

Tell me, when ye were young,

Were there men better, braver than are now,

Standing with "Godlike" written on the brow,

Men noble, true, and strong ?
Or did they choose with meaner things to plod,
Giving to idols homage due to God ?

Did the wild clarion's note,
Or the dread cannon's roar, wake echoes then
Around thy head ; or groans of mangled men
From out the valley float ;
War filling earth with wretchedness and wrong,
Making might right, the feeble ones among,
As in our days ?

Did Slavery's slimy fold,
Like the Laocoon-serpent in the story,
Crush sons and father in its windings gory,
Making the wild shrieks of a dark despair
Ring on the air ;
And not in all the earth a goodly hand,
To strike the withering monster from the land ?

Was there such strife for fame,
For wealth and power, as stirs our people now ?
Was wild Ambition stamped upon the brow ;
The longing for a name,—
Causing the man to scorn his sacred trust
And bow his Maker's image to the dust ?

Were truth and right assailed,
And falsehood rampant o'er the fresh young world?
By fear and hate were poisoned arrows hurled,
Till strong hearts quailed?
And were there still *a few* to stand the shocks,—
Stand as undaunted as yourselves, old Rocks?

Will ye not answer?
Then keep your secret. 'Tis enough for me
To know the present, *with its prophecy*.
I see the lightning flash,
I hear its crash,
The rolling thunder, solemn, sad, and low,—
And then the soft rain falls to bless the earth,
Giving the corn-blade birth,
Teaching the bud and blossom how to grow.
So years will come with Time's on-rolling flood;
Customs and tyrants tottering to and fro,
Like tall oaks in the wind,
Shall fall at last, leaving no trace behind.

Then a new Race shall come
To question of the age that went before,
Along the shore,
And ye will still be dumb;
While I, perchance, with vision clear shall see
The secrets of the long Eternity!

HINTS TO THE GIRLS.

Did you never see a lady
Look into a stranger's face,
In an omnibus or railcar,
As if saying,—“Sir! your place?”

Did you never see a lady
Walk up to the church-pew door,
Lace and ribbons all demanding,—
“Yield your pew, Sir!—*nothing more?*”

Did you never see a lassie
Flirt into an old man's chair,
And, unheeding age or honor,
Let him stand,—no matter where?

Never see a stage-coach emptied,
For some fidget in her pride,
And the weary man of business
Tumbled out, to “ride outside?”

Never go to hear a lecture,
Where some fashionable "dear"
Would come in and make a bustle,
When you most desired to hear?

Routing half the congregation
And disturbing all the rest,
As if *she* were "all creation"—
Being fashionably drest?

Now, dear girls! if you're so thankless,
So exacting, and so free,—
Time will come when gents will answer,
"Ma'am, this seat belongs to me!"

Never, girls! disturb a lecture,—
Church, or hall, where'er you go;
Still respect the rights of others.
This is "Woman's Rights," you know!

Never ask a man, abruptly,
To resign to you his place;
If 'tis offered, thank him kindly,
With a smile upon your face.

If the way is long and weary,
And he cannot find another,
Bid him share the comfort with you,
As you'd share it with a brother!

Thus may you receive forever,
Given with a spirit free,
True respect, and love, and kindness;
Better far than "gallantry!"



TO MY FRIEND.

THROUGH long years of life's endeavor,
Through its brightness and its gloom,
Came thy words in kindness, ever,
All my pathway to illume.

Words of friendship, fitly spoken,
When the harp wailed low and sad;
When the strained strings might have broken,
Had thy touch not made them glad.
As the dew comes to the flower,
As the sunshine falls to bless,

So, in many a trying hour,
Came thy love and faithfulness !

When the world with bitter scorning
Turned aside with taunt and sneer,
Thou didst meet me, as the morning,
Full of brightness and of cheer.

Now are past those days of trial,
And the harpstrings strong and free,—
True as sunshine to the dial,—
Sound this grateful song to thee.

May thy cup be free from sorrow,
And with health and wealth run o'er !
And thy Future gild each morrow
With the good deeds gone before !

May the God of good still bless thee
For the blessings thou hast given,
And no dark, deep grief oppress thee,
Till thou meet'st thy loved—in heaven !

THE LAST ROSE OF SUMMER.

"'Tis the last rose of summer—left blooming alone,
All its lovely companions are faded and gone;
No flower of its kindred, no rosebud is nigh
To reflect back its blushes, and give sigh for sigh."

MOORE.

'Tis the last rose of summer, oh! let it remain;
Oh! still let its sweetness enliven the plain.
Oh! rob it not yet of its beauty and bloom,
Full soon it will wither, and sink to the tomb.

I will wreath round it kindly the leaves of the stem,
That the winds may not visit too roughly the gem.
I will watch the bright leaves till they wither and droop,
And when they are fallen, I'll gather them up.

And, oh! should my fate, lovely rose, be like thine,
Should the chains of affection that round me now twine;
The bright links of kindred be broke, one by one,
Till the last of the loved ones is severed and gone;

Oh! then may the world view with pity my fate,
Nor add to the sorrow it cannot abate;
But kindness and mercy assuage all my woes,
Till I calmly and quietly fall like the rose.

LINES

TO THE CROCUS AND THE BLUEBIRD IN A SNOW-STORM.

FIRST-BORN among the flowers,
 Golden-eyed Daughter of a sunny ray,
What lured thee up to this chill world of ours,
 This snowy day?

Was it the bluebird's song
 Twittered so luringly above thy head,
Asking thy love, the cold, bare boughs among,
 That called thee from thy bed?

Lovest thou his note so well,
 That it could warm thee in the icebound earth,
Bidding the germ within thy bosom swell,
 And quicken into birth?

Did Sympathy,—the dew-eyed child
 Of Love,—plead with thee to give forth thy bloom,
To soothe and bless his passion, lone and wild,
 And cheer his gloom?

Hast thou no fear his note

Will turn to coldness ere the day goes by,
And he on a sure wing away will float,
Leaving thee here to die?

Ha! how the cold winds sweep!

Will he still cheer thee, will he sweetly sing,
Bidding thee cease for sunny skies to weep,
And rest beneath his wing?

Sweet flower of Spring, thy fate

Reminds me of full many a maiden's doom :
Trusting a smile, she finds, when all too late,
Her sky o'erhung with gloom.

And he, who in the hour

Of sunny brightness, sang in genial tone,
Leaves her to brave the Storm King's angry power,
Betrayed, despoiled, alone!

Maiden! beware the voice

Of him, who only sings when bright skies glow.
Wait till the storm hath come, then make thy choice,
And 'scape the direst woe.

THE FADED ONE

You ask me why her eye is dim,
Her face so wan and old;
The smile that plays upon her lip
So spiritless and cold.

Fate hath not cast her idols down
With stern, relentless will;
Parents and kindred, friends and home
Gladden her spirit still.
Wealth strews her onward path with flowers
Of beauty, day by day;
Life's holiest cares and dearest ties
Have bound her all the way.
The sacred name of mother thrills
With rapturous joy her heart;
And wife! How oft that holy word
Hath made her pulses start!
And yet her eye is sunk and dim,
Her face is worn and old,
The smile that plays upon her lip
Is spiritless and cold.

You ask me why? A common tale
It is of common life,
There is no real sympathy
Between the man and wife.
His years would twice have numbered hers,
And still her father smiled,
The world said 'twas a goodly match
For such an artless child.
Her mother's heart beat high with pride;—
His was an honored name!—
She sold her loved, her only child,
For fortune and for fame!
Ay! sold that young and guileless heart
To one all stern and cold,
And chained her free young spirit down
With glittering links of gold!

She loves the flowers; *he* loves them not.
The birds that charm her ear
For him wake discord. His cold thoughts
Fill all her soul with fear.
The glad free laugh he seemed to love
When she was not his own,
Soon grew beneath his stern rebuke
An almost wailing moan.

The harpstrings of her inner life
So tuned to happiness,
A gentle finger might have played
And brought forth strains of bliss ;
But on those chords, from day to day,
Discordant notes he plays,
And wonder that they give him back
Such dull, unmeaning lays.
Oh ! could a warm and loving hand
Those quivering strings have played,
They might through all life's weary years
Sweet harmonies have made.

But now each key and chord is jarred
With every passing hour,
Till the whole instrument is marred
By discord's withering power.
Thus is it that her eye is dim,
Her face so worn and old,
Her lip so pale, her once gay laugh
So spiritless and cold.

All ye who read this simple lay,
Pause, ere it be too late.
Better to live through life unwed,
Than tempt so dire a fate.

Love, only love can keep the chain
Of Hymen bright and fair.
Without it every link must be
Corroded with despair.
No lonelier, sadder, harder lot
For human hearts can be,
Than thus to live a wedded life,
Unblest by sympathy.



THE MANIAC WIFE.

THERE is a woe too deep for words,
An agony too strong for tears,
When the warm, bleeding, quivering chords
Of love, which have been wrung for years,
Are by the hand we trusted riven ;
By one rude blow all swept apart,
And hope and peace and home and heaven
Are shut forever from the heart !

Then doth despair's wild, piercing shriek
Burst from the crushed and vanquished soul ;
And lips, used gentle words to speak,
Breathe curses forth beyond control

And hate will enter where but now
Love nestled warm within the breast,
While the fierce words and kindled brow
Shall tell the cruel fiend's unrest.

Hold, husband, ere it be too late,
Beware of censuring words and strife,
Lest she you chose to be life's mate
Become, as I—a maniac wife.
Speak gently to the one thou'st chosen,—
Kind to the mother of thy boy,
Lest by stern words her heart be frozen,
And thou no more know love or joy

What if her life-harp hath been strung
With chords all quivering and weak?
Oh! should those tender chords be wrung
Till they in wailing anguish break?
If thou art cold and stern of heart,
Thy spirit proud and firm and strong;
In mercy act the brave man's part—
Do not the trusting weak one wrong!

Oh, God! I loved him long, how long!
Faithful my spirit clung to him,
Through dark misfortune, sorrow, wrong,
Love's light waned not, nor e'er grew dim,

But day by day he grew more stern,
More harsh, more cold, and I more sad.
Oh! how my heart and brain now burn.
Lady, I'm mad,—oh! I am mad!



THE WIFE'S PRAYER OF AGONY.

I HAVE wished I could die, again and again,
When the terrible horror has seized my brain,
When the sun was quenched in a cloud of grief,
And "Woe" was written on flower and leaf;
When the song of the bird was as dire a dirge
As the wailing cry of the wrecking surge,
And the earth was black as the sunless sky,—
I have shrieked in my anguish—"Oh, let me die!"

I have prayed to die, when my nerves unstrung
Were with cruel torture and madness wrung;
When the muscles groaned and the sinews cracked,
And the senses reeled, and the soul was racked;
When the torturer stood unmoved and cold
As the cruel wasters of life—of old,
And laughed at my fearful agony!
Then have I prayed, "Let me die, let me die!"

'Twas *not* when *God* chastened, I ask'd to go,
When *Fate* seemed too cruel,—oh, no! oh, no!
Nor yet when misfortunes like whirlwinds came,
Or disease spread its virus throughout my frame.
Not when my loved ones had passed away
To the better land; oh! not then, I say, .
Did my spirit utter its fearful cry
To the Father of Mercy, “Oh, let me die!”

'Twas when I found the sweet spell was broken
That bound my soul by each sacred token,
To him, who had pledged me in early youth,
His life-long fealty of love and truth.
When he told me that love was an idle whim,
A dream, or a fancy,—no more to him;
And spurned me coldly, though yet a bride,
With mocking words from his sheltering side;
'Twas then that I uttered the wailing cry
To the Father of Mercy, “Oh, let me die!”

I had given him all my young heart's wealth—
Faith, Hope, Love, and Beauty, and Strength and
Health;
I had given *myself*, I could give no more,
And he gave me back, ere a moon was o'er,

Indifference, cold as the north wind chill,
Or selfish passion, more fearful still.
And day by day, as the months rolled by
Fetter'd, helpless, anguish'd, I asked to die.

But one thing he gave that awoke my power
And thrill'd my heart, though he cursed the hour
The name of Mother ! A beautiful child
Lay on my bosom and sweetly smiled.
All over my being the chords had birth,
That bound me again to the flower-robed earth
It was mine, and I loved it ! I dared not cry
To the Spirit of Mercy to let me die.

So Love for its sake learns to bear the wrong,
To strangely suffer and yet grow strong,
To forget for long hours his broken vow,
And live in the duties around the now.
We meet and we part all coldly still,
But that one sweet hope he can never chill ;
I have learned to bear all patiently
For that dear one's sake—nor ask to die.

WHEN THIS OLD RING WAS NEW.

WHEN this old ring was new
On my parents' wedding day,
They left the hard old "Granite Hills"
And westward took their way.
A bridle path was all that pierced
The Alleghanies through,
And led them to their forest home—
When this old ring was new !

'Twas threescore years ago, or more,
Ohio then was "*West*"—
They did not dream of worlds beyond,
But were content to rest
In the rich and teeming valleys
Where the beech and buckeye grew ;
And there they built their cabin home
When this old ring was new !

That was a strong and gallant band,
Well fitted for the toil,
Which first let down the sunbeams
On the rich and generous soil.

It was a work for strong, free hands,
Ay, and stout hearts to do,
To conquer those old forests grand,
When this old ring was new !

Danger and toil encompassed them ;
The redman in his wrath
Lay coiling like a rattlesnake,
Beside the dim-worn path.
His tomahawk with blood was red,
His hate no mercy knew.
Those were the times that tried men's *nerves*,
When this old ring was new !

The wolf's howl and the panther's scream
Made hideous then the night,
The warwhoop, still more terrible,
Oft filled them with affright.
The mother's cheek turned pale with fear
When the sire the rifle drew,
From its hook above the cabin fire,
When this old ring was new !

But, with a strong true fortitude—
Each rising fear suppressed—
She pressed her trembling little ones
The closer to her breast ;

For well she knew the hand was strong,
The rifle sure and true,
And love sustained her trembling heart,
When this old ring was new !

And when, the danger o'er,
They gathered round the hearth,
And lightened hearts poured forth the song
Of gratitude and mirth ;
The neighbors joined the concert then,
For neighbors were but few.
They lived a band of brothers all,
When this old ring was new.

No party feuds or politics
Disturbed their quiet joys,
"The country" was the idol both
Of women, men, and boys.
To clear the farm, and till the soil,
Was all they had in view,
They'd never heard of *humbug* yet,
When this old ring was new !

The girls all learned to make the bread,
To turn the spinning wheel ;
And sung like skylarks in the morn,
While whirling round the reel.

And merry was their dance at night
 (They didn't "stay till two"),
And crooked spines were not in vogue
 When this old ring was new !

'They wore the linsey-woolsey then,
 Their own strong hands had made,
And blue and white checked aprons too,
 That would not tear, or fade.
Of rich brocades and rustling silks,
 They had but "precious few,"
And those were "go-to-meeting-things,"
 When this old ring was new !

Five yards were ample for a dress,
 They never asked for more :
They did not trail their skirts along
 The dirty street, or floor.
They looked as trim and tidy then,
 As any one of you,
Who now are laughing at the style
 When this old ring was new !

They were not delicate as you,
 Their hands were not as white,
Their cheeks, instead of rouge and starch,
 Bore Nature's healthful light ;

Each foot a home-knit stocking wore,
And home-made calfskin shoe—
Consumption was the rarest thing,
When this old ring was new !

Good, wholesome, and substantial food,
The festive table crowned,
No far-fetched, hard-cooked luxury,
Upon the board was found.
But labor sweetened every dish,
And that was better, too—
Men didn't have dyspepsia then,
When this old ring was new.

The boys had strong and willing hands
To labor for their bread ;
If they'd no goatees on their chins,
They'd brains within their heads ;
Gold watches then and white kid gloves
Were very, very few,
And fast young men were fewer still,
When this old ring was new !

But now, indeed, the times have changed
In spirit and in letter,
Some think that they are vastly worse,
Some think they're vastly better.

'Tis best to split the difference,
Perhaps, between the two,
They're better more and more they're worse
Since this old ring was new !

Ohio now is "way down East,"
Missouri but a rest,
St. Louis but a starting-point
For those who're going West ;
Hamlets and villages and towns,
And splendid cities too—
Loom up where erst the forest stood,
When this old ring was new !

Millions are blest and thriving now
Where, sixty years ago,
The red man chased the bounding deer,
Or herding buffalo.
The iron horse, with fiery snort,
Flies all the country through,
Where our fathers trudged along on foot
When this old ring was new !

Our ladies do not homespun wear—
They do not weave or spin—
A thousand hands to one are found
In cotton, loom, and gin—

But much they're doing nowadays
They were not used to do
(I shan't tell what, but you may guess)
When this old ring was new !

But my poor muse can't stay to tell ·
Of half the changes made
In morals and religion, in politics and trade ;
I wish I had an artist's skill
To give a sunbeam view—
Of what it is and what it was,
When this old ring was new !

But, like my dear old ring, I find
The story hath no end—
And so I'll clip it off just here
And say "good night, my friend."
Let's struggle to adopt the good
And all the bad eschew—
Nor ever sigh for joys gone by—
When this old ring was new !

THE WIFE.

"You marvel why so oft her eyes
Fill with the heavy dew of tears.
Have I not told thee that there lies
A shadow darkly on her years?"

ALICE CAREY.

COME sit by me, and I will tell
Thee all that cold and with'ring tale,
And how that "shadow" darkly fell,
Upon her lip and brow so pale.
But look into her soft blue eye
That sleeps amid forbidden tears,
And thou canst almost read the why
A blight hath fallen on her years.
It tells of quick and piercing thought;
Of feelings holy, deep, and strong;
Of love with pure devotion fraught;
Love that would live through slight and wrong.

I knew her well, long years ago,
A gleesome, happy hearted thing,
Her spirit like the brooklet's flow
Among the violet buds of spring.

Her laugh pealed sweetest on the ear,
Her step was lightest on the lawn,
The coldest paused her song to hear,
'Twas clear as skylark's note at dawn.

One May day morn a stranger came
Of lofty brow and noble mien,
And rumor gave him wealth and fame.
He saw and loved our village queen.
And oft again he came to woo,
And oft where yon bright waters glide
Beneath the twilight's gentle dew,
They wandered happy, side by side.

Then life to her grew doubly sweet
With harmony before unknown,
For every life-chord seemed to meet
From him, a fondly answ'ring tone.
The flowers she loved grew fairer still,
The birds sang sweeter to her ear,
Each pulse beat with a deeper thrill
Of hope and joy, if he were near.

I saw her at the altar stand
With blushing cheek and beating heart.
I saw him clasp her trembling hand,
And vow to love till death should part.

Ah! little dreamed I in that hour
His soul was cast in baser mould.
I dreamed not, wealth or fame had power
To make that heart to her grow cold.

One little year scarce flitted by
Ere her dimmed eye had told the tale;
And, through long weary years have I
Watched as her pale cheek grew more pale.
One little year, and all those streams,
Which once with love and hope seemed rife,
Grew cold and still 'mid worldly dreams,
'Twas passion warmed them into life.

Oh! oft I've seen her by his side
And heard her whisper gentle words,
As she was wont when first a bride,
In hope to touch those quivering chords,
And wake once more that music strain,
Which, in her happier days, she'd known.
Poor, stricken one! that hope was vain,
Her spirit found no answering tone.

And I have watched the struggling tear
When cold words have been coldly spoken,
And seen her cheek grow pale with fear
And known her heart was almost broken.

No murmuring word she ever spoke,
For he had given her wealth and show,
And though her heart in sadness broke
She must not, dared not tell her woe.

Wealth, kindred, friends, a mother's care,
Gave to her lone heart many a thrill;
But, oh! there is a vacuum there
No love but his can ever fill.
Full many a mournful tale is told
Of young love blighted in the bloom.
Oh! better so, a thousandfold,
Than buried in a living tomb.

My tale is told, and many a one
Grown prematurely gray, will start,
And as she reads will wonder where
I learned the secret of her heart.

ADAM'S THANKSGIVING FOR EVE.

FATHER in heaven !

Maker of all things ! Parent of all good !
Receive my thanks for all Thy blessings given.
And oh ! behold my soul's deep gratitude,
Which *Thou alone* canst measure,—for my words
Are cold, and passionless, and all too weak
To breathe the music of its thrilling chords,
Or its full, rapturous harmony to speak.

Thy “last best gift,” oh ! Father, to me given
Hath made this lonely world a very heaven ;
And bright-winged angels, bending near Thy throne,
Are not more blest than I, since not alone.
May I not then pour forth my soul to Thee,
My Father, for that “last best gift” to me ?

Now all is bright and fair,
And the sweet warblings of the summer birds,
As they float gently on the evening air,
Seem but the distant echo of her words.

And the sweet breath of flowers
Upon the swift-winged zephyrs floating by,
Wafted from Eden's ever-blooming bowers,
Is but the fragrant odor of her sigh.

The blush upon the rose
But the reflection of her cheek's bright hue ;
And the pure light that from the violet glows
Is borrowed from her beaming eye of blue.

Father, all nature speaks in thrilling tone,
Telling me I no longer am alone !

There is no void for me.
A lively bliss awaits me everywhere,
And when I humbly bend myself to Thee,
Pouring my soul in earnest, grateful prayer,
My feeble words are wafted up on high
By her soft flowing strains of sympathy.

At the fresh morning hour,
When the bright dew-drops glitter on each spray
And strains extatic fill each leafy bower,
Giving sweet welcome to the King of day ;

When 'neath these bowers I stray,
The fairest of the fruits and flowers to bring,
When, with a calm and grateful heart, I lay
Upon Thy shrine my humble offering ;

Father of many spheres,
When bending thus before Thy holy throne,
My spirit overflows in joyful tears,
To think that I no more shall praise alone !

When at the evening hour
Nature sinks gladly to her sweet repose,
And angel fingers close each opened flower,
And night o'er all her sable mantle throws ;

When the pure spirits in the realms above
Bend from their bright homes to this world of ours,
Filling the firmament with eyes of love,
To watch and guard pure Eden's sleeping bowers ;

Then will my slumbering thought
Often return to earlier, lonelier days,
Days all with sorrow or with sadness fraught,
When life to me was a bewildering maze ;
When I would fain have changed my lonely lot
With the gay butterfly on airy wing,
Or with the little flower, "forget-me-not,"
O'er which the nightingales so sweetly sing.

A gentle being bright as sunlight seems
O'er me to bend ! all passionate I start

To clasp the fairy phantom in my arms,—
But wake to fold the real to my heart ;
And the soft breathing of her gentle tone
Chides, that I dared to dream myself alone !

Father, Thou hast decreed,
If we Thy holy mandates dare defy,
The day that sees the dark ungrateful deed,
Shall see us die.

I know not what death is ;
But if it be to live without my bride,
To roam again through boundless worlds of bliss
Without a kindred spirit by my side ;

Then, Father, will I be as angels pure,
And never from the path of duty err.
While she endures, so long will I endure ;
And, if I sin, *I'll sin to die with her.*

Father, again I bend before Thy throne
To bless Thee that I am not still alone !

"A VALENTINE."

LINES ON AN ENGRAVING IN AN ALBUM OF A
RICHLY DRESSED LADY.

OH! Is she not a beauty,
With her silks, her lace, her puffs,
Her knots, her rings, her bracelets,
Her bows, her braids, her ruffs?

Those taper fingers, snowy white,
With jewels rarely hung?
I wonder if they ever played
The yeast and flour among?

I wonder if they ever made
A pudding, cake, or pie,
Or stitched a shirt, or sewed a dress,
Or hung up clothes to dry?

I wonder if they ever knit
A pair of woolen hose,
Or set a patch upon a coat,
Or darned the *heels* and *toes*?

I wonder if they ever smoothed
The couch of pain and grief,
Or eased a burden'd heart of toil
Or gave the poor relief?

I wonder if her eyes e'er wept
A tear for others' woe,
Her heart e'er felt, what others feel,
And suffer here below?

That foot, in spangled slipper cased,
So neat, so small, so rare—
Has 't crossed the threshold of the poor,
To cheer the sufferer there?

And does that glittering band surround
A brain more jeweled still;
And beats there, 'neath those bodice folds,
A generous, noble will

If not, though all so beautiful,
I'd have no son of mine
Choose such a gaudy, useless flower
To be his "Valentine."

Better to wed the violet bell,
Among its haunts of green,
Than breathe the incense of his soul
To such a heartless queen.

MADALINE RAY.

BENEATH the old porch sits sweet Madaline Ray—
Plying her needle the long summer day ;
Her eye is as blue as the soft sky of June ;
Her voice an Eolian, kept ever in tune ;
Her step light and gay, as the skipping young fawn,
When brushing the dew from the meadow at dawn—
And genial her love, as a sunbeam in May—
Yet sad is the heart of sweet Madaline Ray !

The old porch is laden with woodbine, so sweet !
And bright are the pansies that bloom at her feet ;
And teeming in beauty are trellis and bowers,
From fresh morning dews, and the soft summer showers.
Her mother is kind, as she knits by the door ;
And father, too, reading his newspaper o'er ;
And Henry is true (so the neighbors all say),
Yet sad is the heart of sweet Madaline Ray !

Ay ! Henry is true, and he loves her full well,
But o'er him a demon is casting its spell—
He tarries too long at the wine-cup at night,
His clear eye is losing its calm, cheerful light ;

Full well knows the maiden, 'tis folly to dare
The *reveler's* love, or his fortune to share ;
He jests at her fears, and with laugh wild and gay,
Cries "I'm in no danger, dear Madaline Ray !

"I played by thy side, Love ! in childhood's bright
hours ;

I wreath'd in thy hair, Love ! the fresh summer flowers ;
I shook down the brown nuts, thy basket to fill ;
For thee the wild squirrel was caught on the hill ;
From childhood to manhood, I've loved only thee ;
I've thy heart—give thy hand, be my Madaline Lee !
Our vows have been plighted, and name thou the day."

"I'll wed no wine bibber," says Madaline Ray.

"I love thee—how truly, Love !—witness my tears ;
I love thee—how wisely !—here witness my fears ;
Through poverty's vale, I would walk by thy side,
In sorrow to soothe thee would still be my pride ;
But I plighted my troth to a man all divine,
Unsullied by revel, untainted by wine
I'll wed with no other—so choose thee this day,
'Tween thy wine and thy word to Madaline Ray."

Now, beneath the old porch, as she stitches the while,
Sad the tune she is humming, and sadder her smile—

The light of her eye dimmed with fugitive tears;
The young heart grown heavy with torturing fears;
Lest the tempter should lure him she loves, from the
 right,
And cloud all her future in sorrow and night—
“He must wrestle with passion a year and a day,
And win,—ere I wed him!” says Madaline Ray.



TO A FRIEND,

ACCOMPANYING A BOUQUET OF SEED-STEMS AND EVERGREENS
GATHERED BY THE ROADSIDE.

THINK of me sometimes, friends !
Not as of spring-time flowers,
Born to make beautiful life's sunny hours;
Shedding their rose-light o'er
 The cultured garden,
And wilting 'neath the storm,
 That comes to harden
These rougher plants of ours.

Think of me ! as you pass
The roadside plants we rashly christen weeds,—

Which scatter o'er the wastes of earth their seeds,
And on whose breasts the wild bird gayly feeds ;
Which cheer the weary laborer on his road,
And help to lighten even the beggar's load,
Filling the laps of children, as they pass
 Barefoot upon the grass,
Pausing to share the beauty that is free,—
Thinking perchance of God, all reverently,
Knowing full well "the Father" placed them there
 For all alike to share,
To lift their glowing love-tints all unfaded,
When autumn storms have shaded
The feeble sunlight of the winter's sky,
And howling winds sweep by.

Think of me, like these weeds ;
Answering life's humble needs,
Cheering the lowly, whom misfortune's blast
 Has overcast ;
And helping on the struggling poor,
Forever with us, even at our door,
 And those,
Not poor, perchance, in gold,
But poor in hearts so cold,
That not a flower or leaf can live and glow
In the chill soil that lies their lives below ;

Making no wintry hours
Brighter with roadside flowers.

Think of me as of God's weeds,—
Dropping the wayside seeds
Of kindly deeds,—
That, unlike these, shall never, never die !



THE CONSUMPTIVE'S PRAYER.

OH ! let me go from this land of flowers,
Where the sun ever rests on the orange bowers,
Where the regal magnolia spreads its bloom,
And the spice-tree lavishes rich perfume ;
Where, through all the year, in the citron grove
The star-wingèd birds warble songs of love ;
From this land where no chilling winds can come,
Oh, take me away to my mountain home !

Take me back ! Let me see the snow-clad hill,
And the icied roof beside the rill,
Where the warmest gleam of a winter day
Scarce melts the gems from the glittering spray.

Yes! 'tis there, 'tis there! all unchilled, I know,
The kindest streams of affection flow.
Then, a dying stranger, why should I roam,
Far, far from the loves and the joys of home?

Ye tell me oft that this beautiful clime
Will restore my manhood's vigorous prime;
That the fragrant breezes will waft away
From my cheek the flushings of swift decay.
Oh, never! oh, never! I feel it now,—
The cold hand of death is upon my brow,—
And without a fear will I bid him come,
If you'll bear me back to my childhood's home!

But, oh! let me not in this strange land die,
With no throbbing heart, beating wildly nigh;
To go for aye to the arms of death
With no one to garner my parting breath;
No mother, no sister, no love at hand
To weep, as I pass to the better land!
Oh! it must not be—I'll no longer roam,—
Take me back, take me back! *Let me die at home!*

THE FELON.

AN old man stood by the anvil's side,
And toiled from sun to sun ;
'Twas only when the daybeams died,
That the old man's task was done.
The frosts of eighty winters had bleached
Into silver his jetty hair ;
His form was gaunt, his joints were stiff,
And his brow deep-seamed with care.

All the live-long day his hammer fell
On the iron hissing red ;
And seldom he spoke to his fellow-man
Or lifted his weary head.
His eye was bright and his sight was keen,
But his features were stern and cold ;
And never a smile played over the face
Of that man so worn and old.

Ah ! many an hour I have watched his hand,
As his strokes unerring fell ;
And I marvel'd much where one like him
Could have learned the trade so well.

So I said to the worn old man one day,
 "Is there no one thy toil to share?
No son to help in thy coming age,
 And thy burdens now to bear?"

The old man slowly lifted his head,
 And a tear rushed to his eye,
He brushed it away with his toil-worn hand
 Ere he made me this reply :

"Stranger, I once was pure like thee,
 And the child of pride and wealth,
My young limbs bounded blithe and free
 In the strength of youth and health.
A father's smile, a mother's love
 Beamed on my buoyant way,—
They died, and gave me all the wealth
 They had toiled for many a day.

"Wealth gave me power, wealth gave me friends,—
 Fiends were a fitter name,—
Who tempted, praised, and flattered the most,
 When there was most to blame.
I had a wife,—oh! heaven, how fair!
 A son, too, his father's joy,
But I drained the wine-cup of its wrath—
 O God! I *killed my boy*.

“Yes, in a dark and fearful hour
Of passion, guilt, and shame,
Amid the rev’ler’s drunken rout,
My heated brain in flame,—
I heard a demon’s lip reproach
My pure and loving wife,
Believed his tale, and vowed revenge—
I strove to take her life.

“The blow I meant should pierce the heart
Of my once-treasured bride,
Fell on the bright-haired, darling boy
That slumbered by her side.

“Wealth, fame, and friends, in that dark hour,
All vanished ’mid the strife.
All—did I say? No, there was one,
My own kind, angel wife.
She loved me,—though I’d killed our boy!
She wept my felon’s doom,
She cheered me through its ling’ring years
Of terror and of gloom.

“‘For life!’ the cold stern Judge decreed,—
Oh! I had toiled with joy
Ten thousand lives, could I have given
Her back our noble boy.

“The dungeon’s cell, the felon’s doom,
Were mine for twoscore years ;
And still had been, but for *her* love,
Her pleading, and her tears.

“Thou askest where I learned my trade—
’Twas in the murd’rer’s cell,
’Mid groans and tears ! Dost marvel, boy,
That I have learned it well ?
Men spurned the guilty convict ; but
She hath the deed forgiven.
And now she leans upon my heart,
And draws it back to heaven.

“Now, go thy way ; but heed the word
Of the felon worn and old,
‘A conscience void of all offense
Is far more worth than gold.’
Oh ! ‘touch not, taste not, handle not’
The tempting, poisoned bowl ;
’Tis drugged with all the damning crimes
That ever cursed the soul.”

He ceased,—and again the hammer fell
On the iron hissing red,
For he must earn for his good old wife,
And himself, the daily bread.

LANDING OF PIONEERS

AT THE MOUTH OF THE MUSKINGUM, OHIO, APRIL 7, 1788.

“A SONG of the Early Times out West,”

And that bold adventurous band
Who first set foot upon these shores
Where now their children stand;
Who fell'd the lordly forest tree
And built the Cabin Home,
Resolved on meeting valiantly
All dangers that might come.
A strong and hardy race were they,
To wield the axe and hoe,
When first they came as Pioneers,
Just sixty years ago!

The April winds swept o'er the hills
And bowed the forest tree,
And wild-wood flowers were blossoming,
And birds were singing free,
The wild deer bounded o'er the plain,
The wolf's long howl was heard
And oft the panther's fearful scream
The stoutest bosom stirr'd,

The wily Indian roam'd the wood
And sprung his bended bow,
When first they came as Pioneers,
Just sixty years ago!

But like a band of brothers then
Our worthy Fathers stood,
And met with firm and cheerful front
The dangers of the wood;
E'en woman's heart grew bold and strong
Amid the toil and fear,
And with unshrinking heart and hand
Gave comfort, aid, and cheer.
Sweet were the social joys of life—
Few others did they know—
When first they came as Pioneers,
Just sixty years ago!

But years rolled on and swept away
Their trials and their foes,
And soon the wilderness was made
To blossom as the rose,
The bleating of the gentle sheep,
The lowing of the kine,
Were heard, where once the panther screamed
In days of Old Lang Syne.

Our worthy Sires, all danger o'er
Now felt life's joyous flow—
Nor mourned that they were Pioneers,
Just sixty years ago !

But few are left to bless us now
Of all the honored band—
And they, ere long, must pass away
Into the spirit land.
Oh may their fleeting years be blest
By Sympathy and Love !
Till God shall call each wanderer home
To dwell with him above.
And may we all by well spent lives,
Of strength and virtue show
We're worthy of the Noble Sires
Of sixty years ago !

LINES

DEDICATED TO THE LIVING MEMBERS OF THE PIONEERS OF
WASHINGTON COUNTY, OHIO.

I STAND beneath the roof-tree,
I tread the spacious halls,
I gaze in flashing mirrors,
I mark the gilded walls;
Beneath my feet are carpets,
Roses above the door,
But my mind is with my father,
And the cabin days of yore.

There sits an old man dozing;
He's weary of his toil,
In the corn-field and meadow.
He loves the teeming soil;
His hands from youth have labored,
He loves to labor still;
It gives him health and comfort,
As he journeys down life's hill.

He's an old man now, and thoughtful,
And he tells us of the ways
Of his father and his mother,
In the good old "early days,"
When by "La Belle Riviere"
On "La Belle Prairie" land,
They built the first rude cabins,
'Neath the forest oaks so grand.

Threescore years and ten are numbered
Since the woodman's axe first fell,
Waking echoes from the hill-sides,
By the crash adown the dell.
In that cabin, rude and homely,
Was that stalwart old man born,
Who to-day controls the mansion,
Who to-day hoes out the corn.

Then, a home amid the forest
Filled his mother's heart with fear ;
Now, a smiling, golden harvest
Gives the farmer's heart good cheer ;
Then, o'er valley, plain, and mountain
Spread a wilderness unbroken ;
Now, a mighty State rejoiceth
In a life of goodly token.

Oh ! a monument, the grandest,
Is Ohio now, I ween,
Of the power of human progress,
That the world hath ever seen ;
For the children's feet, that pattered
O'er the cabin's puncheon-floor,
Now walk its marble State House,
Full two million souls, or more.

Who hath felled these mighty forests ?
Who reaped the golden grain ?
Who hath sent the thundering rail-car
Through the mountain, o'er the plain ?
Who hath built the people's school-house,
Filled with music every vale,
Where once only Indian war-whoops
Found proud echoes in the gale ?

Till, from the old Atlantic,
With its ceaseless surging roar,
To the golden-bound Pacific,—
From the east to western shore,—
The axe, the plow, the hammer,
The reaper and the mill,
The school-house and the church-spire
Tell of Progress onward still.

All honor to the heroes !

Who, with hearts so strong and true,
Conquered forest, beast, and Indian,

In the western wilds, so new—
Not with wicked, vain ambition ;

Not with war-shrieks, fierce and wild ;
But with reaping-hook and plowshare,
Making home for wife and child !

Opening wide, to every nation,

Every door to wealth and fame ;
Making tyrants fear and tremble,

And oppressed ones bless the name
Of these truly good and noble,

Who have stayed the oppressor's rod,
And have lifted suffering nations
Nearer Truth, and Love, and God !



IOWA.

AROUSE, my Muse ! restring thy Lyre

With silvery chords, all new and strong,
And let the theme thy hand inspire

To sweep the strings with stirring song ;

To breathe an earnest heartfelt lay
For young, fresh, sunlit Iowa!

Sing of her as a maiden fair,
Yet in her childhood's sportive glee.
Flowers of the Prairies in her hair;
With buoyant step and bosom free,
Just starting forth to meet the day—
Beautiful, budding Iowa!

Fair as the snowberry flower her brow,—
The wild-rose lends her cheek its bloom;
And her sweet breath of fragrance, now,
Is the ripe strawberries' rich perfume,
As, blushing in her lap, they lay—
Luxuriant, lovely Iowa!

Her dress of velvet, soft and green,
Gemmed with the crimson lily's hue,
And star-flower with its golden sheen,
And iris with its eye of blue;
While blossoming wheat and corn blades lay
O'er all the robes of Iowa!

She bathes her in clear purling streams,
Drinks at the gushing springs and wells,

By the meandering river dreams,
 In the deep shade of sylvan dells ;
Or hides from sweeping winds away
In woodland screens—young Iowa !

Gayly each passing day she sings
 By mansion proud, and cabin door,
As still to each she kindly brings
 Of fruits and flowers an ample store.
Her heart is open as the day,—
And mines of wealth has Iowa !

Clasping the hand of earnest toil
 To her rich palm, she bids all “ come !”
Come, live upon her own free soil,—
 She’ll give them plenty, peace, and home.
“ Come, come from stony lands, to-day,
 To the dear fields of Iowa !”

“ Come from the crowded city-mart,
 Come from the isles beyond the sea,
Where toil must groan with sinking heart,
 In tyrant’s chains. Come, come, be free !
Cast off your fetters while ye may,
Come, live and love in Iowa !”

List, all ye restless, to her song ;
Hope's waving pinion beckons on.
Come, then, with pure hearts, true and strong,
And soon the victory shall be won.
You will not wish, nor dare to stray,
From the rich lands of Iowa !



THE SPIRIT OF PROGRESS.

THE gloomy night is breaking,
Even now the sunbeams rest,
With a warm and cheering radiance,
On the hill-tops of the west ;
The mists are slowly rising
From the valley and the plain ;
And a spirit is awaking,
That shall never sleep again.

Hush ! ye may hear, that listen,—
The spirit's stirring song,
That surges like old ocean,
With its solemn bass along.

“ Ho ! can ye stay the rivers,
Or bind the wings of light ;
Or cloud the radiant morning,
With the old and gloomy night ?

“ Nor shall ye check my impulse,
Or stay it for an hour,
Until earth's groaning millions
Have felt its healing power.
Old Error, with her legions,
Shall fall before my wrath—
No blood, no tear, no anguish,
Shall mark my conquering path ;

“ For my spirit is Progression,
In the vigor of its youth,—
The foe of all oppression,—
And my armor is the Truth.
And upward, onward, heavenward,
My spirit still shall soar ;
Till love and peace shall triumph,
And falsehood rule no more.”

DARE TO STAND ALONE.

BE firm, be bold, be strong, be true,
And "dare to stand alone ;"
Strive for the right whate'er ye do,
Though helpers there be none.

Nay, bend not to the swelling surge
Of popular sneer and wrong ;
'Twill bear thee on to ruin's verge,
With current wild and strong.

Stand for the Right! Humanity
Implores, with groans and tears,
Thine aid to break the fest'ring links
That bind her toiling years.

Stand for the Right! Though falsehood reign,
And proud lips coldly sneer,
A poisoned arrow cannot wound
A conscience pure and clear.

Stand for the Right!—and with clean hands
Exalt the truth on high;
Thou'lt find warm, sympathizing hearts
Among the passers-by—

Men who have seen, and thought, and felt,
Yet could not boldly dare
The battle's brunt, but by thy side
Will every danger share.

Stand for the Right!—proclaim it loud—
Thou'lt find an answering tone
In honest hearts, and thou no more
Be doomed to stand alone!

LINES

ON THE PASSAGE OF THE FUGITIVE SLAVE BILL.

(IN REPLY TO A FRIEND.)

Do you ask what I think? Do you ask what I feel?
Came my thoughts from the *pit*? Is my heart made of
steel?

Does the lamb skip and play, when he hears the wolf
howl?

Does the nightingale sing in the claw of the owl?

Do the deer o'er the green hills, go bounding no more?

Has the eagle forgot on proud pinion to soar;

Have justice and mercy deserted the earth;

Love, kindness, and feeling, the home and the hearth;

Could you *think* that aught else from my spirit would
flow,

But a dirge for my country of sorrow and woe?

A dirge for my country, its guilt and its wrong,—

A dirge for the weak, broken down by the strong,—

A dirge for the glory that's passing away,—

A dirge for our Fillmore, our Webster, our Clay.

Woe! woe to the few, who have sullied our stars,
 Who've forgotten our heroes, their toils and their scars;
 The curse of the victims shall blacken each name,
 The scorn of the true shall consign it to shame,
 As a blot,—a pollution where'er it is traced,—
 A statesman dishonored,—a country disgraced!

Oh, Northmen! oh, Northmen! beware of the hour
 When you sell yourselves out to the slaveholding power,
 When you barter your souls for a five dollar fee,
 To fetter the spirit that dares to be free;
 Beware how you take up the shackles, to bind
 The limbs that have left a harsh master behind!
 Beware how you stand in the way of the brave
 Who *has manhood to feel he will not be a slave!*
 Beware, if you covet such bloodshed and strife,
 How you trifle with what is far dearer than life;
 For hands strong and willing, from hill top and plain,
 Will *dare* you to fasten the "Fugitive's chain!"

Oh! who were your sires! Came they not from that band
 Who spurned the oppressor with heart and with hand,
 With sword of Rebellion bound firm on their thigh,
 Went forth with strong will, to be freemen, or DIE?
 Signed their hands to that great declaration that we
 So boast; that *all* are born equal and free!

And now will you sully the name of those sires,
 Will you pull down home altars, and put out home fires?
 Will you break the bruised heart for the tinge of the
 skin,
 And smother the God-like that's burning within?

Oh, Northmen! oh, Northmen! beware of the day
 When you place yourselves thus in a hostile array
 'Gainst the seeker of Freedom, whatever his hue,
 Though his skin should be sable, his soul may be true.

Is the Negro a Man? Hath his voice not a tone,
 His heart not a music, that answer your own?
 Hath he not the same hopes; hath he not the same fears?
 Feels he not the same joys; weeps he not the same tears?
 Do not the same loves make his pulse wildly start,
 Are not wife—mother—sister, as dear to his heart?
 Bears he not the same sorrow; the same chastening rod;
 Has he not the same Saviour; *has he not the same God?*

Oh, Northmen! oh, Northmen! can you be the knaves
 Who will turn out to fetter the poor flying Slaves;
 To bind like a beast for a master's control,
 The man to whom God gave a reasoning soul,
 And help bear him back into Slavedom again,
 To toil out his years 'neath the lash and the chain?

A curse to the land where his sweat drops shall fall,
A curse to the country that holds him in thrall;
Oh, Northmen ! oh, Northmen ! beware of the hour
When you sell yourselves out to the Slavecatching power.



WINFIELD SCOTT ON SLAVERY.

"FROM the promise made to Abraham, some two thousand years had elapsed before the advent of our Saviour, and the Israelites, the chosen people of God, were, for wise purposes, suffered to remain in bondage longer than Africans have been on our shore. This race has already experienced the resulting compensations alluded to; and as the white missionary has never been able to penetrate the dark regions of Africa, or to establish himself in its interior, it may be within the scheme of Providence that the great work of spreading the Gospel over that vast continent, with all the arts and comforts of civilization, is to be finally accomplished by the black man restored from American bondage. A foothold there has already been gained for him, and in such a scheme, centuries are but as seconds to Him who moves worlds, as man moves a finger.

"I do but suggest the remedies and consolations of slavery to inspire patience, hope, and charity on all sides. The mighty subject calls for the exercise of all man's wisdom and virtue, and these may not suffice without aid from a higher source."—GEN. SCOTT'S LETTER ON SLAVERY

HOLD ! thou ruthless Agitator,
Pause amid thy mad career.
Hear'st thou not "the Hero's" warning,—
"God hath placed the bondman here."
By his Providence, the father
Hath been stol'n from Afric's sands,
And made bondman to our people,
In our sunny Southern lands.

Ay, 'twas for "His own great purpose,"
That He sent the mothers there,
Doomed to toil and groan in anguish,
And to die in dark despair!
It is He who bids those mothers
Bring forth slaves in woe and pain,—
Those three million sons and daughters,
For the block, the lash, the chain!

There was promise made to Abraham,—
But two thousand years rolled on,
Ere the advent of the Saviour,
Ere the victory was won.
If our God, in his great wisdom,
Suffered Israel to remain,
Israel, his chosen people,
Groaning 'neath a tyrant's chain;
Shall rash Afric's sons and daughters
Cry to Him for help so soon,
Asking of our boasting freemen
Liberty's too sudden boon?

Shall the restless, wild fanatic
Dare to claim for them a "right,"
While they're being brought *through slavery*
To the holy Gospel light?

Hold, then, ranting Aboliti'nist !
Sin not so against high Heaven,
Thwart not thus the glorious mission
Unto chattel slavery given.

Wait, I charge thee, till God's pleasure
Shall the bondman's chain remove ;
Till all Afric's dark-browed children
Are brought into light and love.
Keep ye silence in submission,
For Jehovah, wise and strong,
Will work out the great salvation,—
Through oppression, crime, and wrong !

Preach the Gospel's consolation,
Hope and Patience 'neath the rod,
Virtue, Charity, and Wisdom,
Looking up for help to God.
Let the bondman bear his burdens ;
Barter human hearts for gold ;
Let the mother and her children
On the auction block be sold ;
Give the pure and pious maiden
To the lust of beastly men ;
And the panting flying victim,
Send, with chains, to chains again !

Burst life's holiest ties asunder;
Trample virtue in the dust.
Is it not "the scheme" of Wisdom?
And is not Jehovah just?
Then resist all agitation,
Wait God's own good time to save.
"Centuries are seconds to his sight,"—
Though centuries still to slaves!—
Up, up! freemen, and be doing,
There is work for all to do,
Up, sustain your "compromises,"
To "finalities" be true.
Up, up! voters, to your duty,
There's a *party* now to save,
Ye shall not think, nor feel, nor speak
Of the down-trodden slave!

Up, up! then to your duty;
What ye do it matters not,
So ye work with *God* for slavery!
So ye vote for Winfield Scott!
Hoist the stars and stripes of freedom,
Save the Union, wrong or right,
Toss our banner to the breezes,—
This its motto, "Scott and might!"

Ay! resist all agitation,
Let no man for freedom cry,
If he dare,—like Sayres and Drayton,
In the dungeon let him die.
Up! then, Whigs, and to your duty,
Bow beneath the Southern rod,
Save the Union, save the *party*—
Leave the slave alone with God!



THE CAPTIVE SLAVE.

'Tis young Ida's bridal night,
And friends are gathered in yon stately hall,
While mirth and music shake the ancient wall,
For hearts are free and light:
While I, within this dungeon, groan with pain.
Is there no way to break this galling chain?

With the first beams of dawn
Will my young mistress leave her childhood's home,
With her heart's chosen, to the south to roam.
I with her must be gone;
For she has vowed to sell me for my pride.
Oh, that I had in infancy have died!

'Twas scarce an hour ago
She bade me dress her for her bridal fair,
And wreathe the jewels in her braided hair;
And then I spoke my woe—
Told her my love, and begged her not to break
The ties that bound me, for her own love's sake.

Then she did coldly sneer
That one like me should dare to think or feel,
As if my heart were made of ice or steel!
I answered without fear;
Her pride and scorn had roused, beyond control,
The spirit of my sire within my soul.

"Ida, you loved me well
When in our infant days we fondly slept
On the same breast, and daily smiled and wept—
Loved more than I can tell.
And scarce an hour hath passed for twenty years
In which I have not shared your smiles and tears.

"And will you sell *me* now,
With whom so oft in childhood's hours you played,
Because, forsooth, there is a deeper shade
Upon my cheek and brow?
Have I not heard you warble freedom's songs?
From your own lips, proud girl, I learned my wrongs.

“Once, it was long ago,
My mother told me, mid her racking pains,
That the same blood was coursing in our veins.

Ida, it must be so.
Had they not scourged her into madness wild,
She ne’er had told that secret to her child.”

Then did my mistress rail.
She raised her jeweled hand to strike. But no,
She called another to inflict the blow !

She could not brook that tale.
We stood before the mirror ; she could trace
The same wild lightning glance upon each face.

“Ho, bear away this slave,
And to the ingrate fifty lashes give,
Bind her with chains, and let her lonely live ;
No mercy let her have.
The base-born thing ! to taunt me to my face,
That my blood mingles with her craven race.”

They did her bidding well.
While the priest joined in wedlock’s holy bands
Young Ida and her lord, they bound my hands—
Those worse than fiends of hell—

* * * *

And for each word the saintly father spoke,
They laid upon my quivering back a stroke.

* * * * *

And they have sent you here
To bind my bleeding wounds for me, oh, mother!
And you to aid and comfort me, my brother,
And speak a word of cheer,
Lest I faint utterly; oh, brother, think again!
Is there no way to break this galling chain?

Think you that she is happy now—
Young Ida—in her robes of dazzling whiteness,
With diamonds, glitt'ring in their starry brightness,
Upon her fair young brow?
Can she forget the loves of other years?
Can she forget my groans, and prayers, and tears?

Can the sweet music strain
Make her forget my deep and burning wrong?—
These galling manacles so cold and strong,
My agony, my pain?
Think again, brother! Mother, think again!
Is there no way for me to break this chain?

And will she bid me go?—
Sell me forever, mother, from thy side—

With thee, my brother, never more to bide ?

Oh, what a fearful woe !

Think again, brother ! Mother, think again !

Is there no way to break this galling chain ?

And from my heart's first love

(Oh ! she may know the sacred name of "wife !")

But though it break the very chords of life,

I must from hence remove.

Think again, brother ! Mother, think again !

Is there no way, no hope, to break this chain ?

* * * * *

No hope ? That I deny.

Here to my heart I'll plunge the blade of steel.

Go, tell my mistress I can love and feel,

And I can dare and die.

Think no more, brother ; think no more for me ;

Mother, farewell ; your captive child is free !

AN APPEAL.

THE following lines were suggested by the perusal of the subjoined

"NOTICE.—For sale, a colored girl of *very superior qualifications*, who is now in Mr. Hall's jail, Norfolk. *She is what speculators call a fancy girl.* A bright mulatto, fine figure, straight black hair, and very black eyes, remarkably neat and clean in person. I venture to say that there is not a better seamstress, cutter, and fitter of ladies' and children's dresses in Norfolk, or elsewhere, or a more fanciful knitter of head bags, money purses, etc.

"Any lady or gentleman in Norfolk, or Portsmouth, who may wish to purchase a girl of this description (whom I consider the most valuable in Virginia), may take her and try her a month or more at my risk, and, if she does not answer the description here given, may return her to Mr. H.

"The cause of offence, for which I intend, though reluctantly, to sell her, is, that she has been recently induced by some colored persons to make her escape with them to the North, in which she failed, and is now for sale. Apply to the subscriber, in Suffolk, or to Jas. Murdaugh, Esq., or C. C. Robinson, of Portsmouth, for further information.

"JOSEPH HOLLIDAY."

OH, God of Mercy! can it be
 In this bright land of ours,
 Where freedom songs are daily sung,
 Among our birds and flowers;

 That woman's form must wear the chain
 In shame and misery,
 And pine within a loathsome cell
 Because she would be free?

In this our proud and boasted land
Can such a tale be told,
And not a million tongues and pens
Rebuke the tyrant bold?

Stars of the North,—a countless host,—
Shine not to gild the day!
But give, oh! give to darkening night
Your clearest, brightest ray.

While "Bolton's" muse admiring sings
"God bless the Sultan, brave!"
Oh! bid her lend her strength to help
That wretched suffering slave.

Sigourney, tune thy poet lyre,
Nor give to "Shreds" thy song,
Oh! breathe out all thy spirit fire
To right a woman's wrongs.

And Lynch and Osgood, where are ye?
You both have hearts to feel;
Though not upon your own necks rests
The proud oppressor's heel.

Leslie and Sedgwick, will ye give
To fiction all your worth,
While such a tale of human woe
Is echoing through the earth?

Stars of the North, send not away
To distant lands your light,
While Slavery's blighting, withering curse
Wraps half our own in night.

Still sympathize with Hungary,
And sing your praise of Rome;
But pass not with indifference by
The struggling slave at home.

Stars of the North, oh! let me ask
Is genius true and brave?
Hadst each a child, what would you do
If that child were a slave?

THE SUNRISE CHIMES.

SUNDAY MORNING.

LIST to the chime,
Gayly ringing !
“Slavery, Intemp’rance, Want, and Crime !”
Is the song it is singing ;
Singing of these in the holy time
Of the morning hour,
While the dew sleeps heavily on the flower

LIST to the chime,
Gayly ringing !
“Slavery, Intemp’rance, Want, and Crime !”
Is the song it is singing ;
Of the groaning slave in his galling chain,
Of the drunken reveler’s aching brain,
Of the homeless child, with weary feet,
Who slept last night on the stony street ;
Of the fallen maiden, so lost, so low,
Wasting her life in the haunts of woe ;
The murdered mother, the starving child ;
It is singing of these in a chorus wild.

List to the chime,
Gayly ringing !

“Slavery, Intemp’rance, Want, and Crime !”

Is the song it is singing.

“Hear ye ! hear ye ! hear ye !”

(In this home of the brave, this land of the free,
Where the star-spangled banner so proudly waves),

“We will sell to-morrow a lot of slaves.”

To the Court House then,

To-morrow at ten,

For then and there will be sold,

To the highest bidder, for sordid gold,

Jane, Henry, Nora, and Ben,

Cæsar and Carrie, and Tom and Dell,

And a host beside, all warranted well ;

And slaves for life—all Christians too !

Good hands to cook, and wash, and sew ;

And one is a preacher ; so ring the bell

For these slaves for life ; let them hear the knell

That their fellows toll, their God to mock

O’er his image sold on the auction block !

Ring, ring, ring !

A merry peal o’er the grog-shop there,

Licensed and sanctioned by men of prayer,

As well as by men of curses.

They hang the bell in the steeple high,
Ring merry peals as the world goes by,
 While the grog-shop fills their purses ;
 Aye, ring, ring
The merry peal as the world goes by,
Turn their gaze from the earth to the steeple high,
 That they see not the woe
 That lies reeking below.
They have paid their part for the merry chimes,
They have prayed their prayers o'er the earth's dark
 crimes,
And they list well pleased to the merry bells,
Yet hear not a word of the tale each tells
Of the rowdy revel, the drunken fight,
The brother slain at dead of night,
Of the husband hurried away from sight,
Of the young wife shrieking in wild affright,
Of the prison dank, the dark despair,
The sister's anguish, the mother's prayer,
The little one's eloquent wail of woe,
The old man's groan, with his gray locks low,
The maiden's cry o'er the lover slain,
The felon's curse in his binding chain.
Oh ! they hear not a word of the tale each tells,
But laugh with delight at the merry bells !

They have paid their dimes
For the sunrise chimes,
And what care they for grog-shop crimes?

List to the chime,
Gayly ringing,
Wildly it floats on the morning air,
Calling the people to early prayer;
Each sound, to my ear, is a cry of despair
From hearts wrung by tyranny, want or care.
Yet still I hear a soft voice singing,
Sweetly it falls on the listening ear
Of all who its gentle tones will hear;
It touches the heart with its cadence clear,
And bids it with hope and faith draw near,
And that love that casteth out all fear,
And join in the grand refrain :
“There’s a good time coming,” when men will be
True to themselves and humanity;
When the master shall loosen the bondman’s chain,
And the slave stand forth as a man again;
When the grog-shop door shall be found no more;
When—instead of a tempter—a guide and friend,
To stay the steps of the weak, and lend
A helping hand and a word of cheer,
Shall be ever ready and ever near,

To lure them away from the paths of strife,
And plant their feet in the ways of life;
When man shall be to his fellow true,
Doing as he would have him do.
Then "Slavery, Intemp'rance, Want, and Crime,"
Shall be sung no more by the sunrise chime.
Then shall be lived out God's own plan,
And a chorus shall sound o'er land and sea,
From the rescued hearts of humanity—
"Peace on earth, good will to man;"
 And the sunrise chime,
 In the holy time,
Shall answer back, from every clime,
The chorus of angels and men sublime:
"Peace on earth, good will to man."



THE FISHERMAN OF BEAUFORT.

THE tide comes up and the tide goes down,
 And still the fisherman's boat
At early dawn and at evening's shade
 Is ever, ever afloat.

His net goes down and his net comes up,
And we hear his song of glee,
"De fishes dey hates de ole slave nets ;
But comes to de nets ob de free."

The tide comes up and the tide goes down,
And the oysterman below
Is picking away in the shiny sands,
In the sands of the long ago.
But now if an empty hand he bears,
He shudders no more with fear,
There's no stretching-board for the aching bones,
No lash of the overseer.

The tide comes up and the tide goes down,
And ever I hear a song,
As the moaning wind through the moss-hung oak
Sweep cheerily along.
"Oh ! massa white man, help de slave
And de wife and chillen too.
Eber dey'll work wid de hard worn hand
If 'ell gib 'em work to do."

The tide comes up and the tide goes down,
But it bides no tyrant's word,
As it chants unceasing its anthem grand
Of freedom—to the Lord.

The fisherman floating on its breast
 Has caught the key-note true—
 “De sea works, massa, for ’tself and God,
 And so muss de black man too.

“Den gib him de work and gib him de pay
 For de chillen and wife him love,
 And de yam shall grow and de cotton blow
 And him neber, neber rove.

For him lub de sunshine of de Souf
 And de ole magnolia-tree ;
 Oh ! neber him trouble de icy Norf—
 Ef de black folk am go free.”



IMPROMPTU.

I'll whisper my condemnation of Ohio," said an old farmer, roused by the speaker.

"Shame on her," replied Mr. Hale. "No whispering. You have whispered long enough. It is time for the freemen of Ohio to SPEAK OUT."

"Ay," shouted the crowd. "No more whispering. Free speeches and bold speeches are needed, and must be had and heard, North and South. We will *speak out* "

SPEAK out, speak out the earnest thought
 That's struggling from within,
 Speak out, God hath your conscience taught,
 Speak, purge your souls from sin.

Speak out, let not Ohio stand
Charged with the blasting crime
Of adding to the bondman's chains,
Through years of coming time.

Speak out, and make your voices heard
By all the cringing North.
Shout Freedom, and that magic word
Shall bring its thousands forth.

Ay, bring them out to dare and do
In this dark trying hour,
To stand with fearless front and true
Against oppression's power.

"Shame on Ohio?" Yes, 'tis shame
That on her hills or plains
One man is found, who dares to vote
Another man to chains.

More shameful still, that there is one
So fallen, so lost, so low
As to consign a woman's form
To starving, crime, and woe.

Oh! God of mercy, hear my prayer;
Let not my native land

Let not Ohio's mothers bear
Henceforth the withering brand.

That they have given to curse the earth
A set of cringing knaves,
Who dare degrade, or shame their birth
By forging chains for slaves.

Ay, forging chains that shall endure
While time his ages rolls ;
Cold, fettering, galling, damning chains,
Chains for their own poor souls.

Up, women, to your duty now.
Up, while the day is bright,
Work, work, while yet the daylight lasts,
For freedom, truth, and right.

Cast off the fetters and the gyves,
Which ye so long have worn,
Ye yet may save Ohio's name
From shame and taunt and scorn.

AN INDEPENDENCE ODE.

1850.

HARK ! to the spirit-stirring drum,
The deep-mouth cannon's awful roar ;
From city, town, and shore they come,
Echoing our hills and valleys o'er ;
Proclaiming this the historic hour
That freed us from a tyrant's power.

A million tongues the silence break,
With ringing shouts of " Liberty !"
A nation's voice, triumphant, speaks
Our country glorious, great, and free !
O'er all the land the merry bell
Rings out its peal, that " all is well."

Ay ! shout for freedom, loud and long,
Raise, to the very heavens, your cry ;
Shout for " the *Union*," proud and strong,
While the chained fugitive goes by !
Shout ! ye may drown the cry of pain,
The bondman's prayer, the clanking chain.

Shout! while the cry of Long and Sims
Is yet re-echoing through the earth;
Shout hallelujahs, odes, and hymns,
And hush their groans with noisy mirth.
Shout! there are but *three million slaves*
In all the land! Shout loud, ye braves!

Shout! Lewis Cass and Henry Clay
Are with you, strong in "freedom's" cause.
Shout! "Ichabod" will speak to-day
For "*Union, Liberty, and Laws*;"
Thanking kind Heaven, with upturned eyes,
The Union's saved—by compromise!

Ay! shout for freedom, long and loud,
For Justice and for Liberty;
Raise high the nation's banner proud,
That all its stars and stripes may see!
Shout!—while the fugitive ye track,
And bear him bound and bleeding back!

Shout loud!—ere Heaven's avenging stroke
On your devoted heads shall fall.
Shout loud!—while bending 'neath the yoke,
Ye flourish Freedom's coronal!
Shout!—o'er your millions in distress,
Shout!—o'er your fettered tongues and press!

Oh, God !—is this the glorious land
Where Putnam fought, and Warren died ;
Where Green, De Kalb, and Lafayette,
With Washington stood side by side,
Leading our fathers in the fight
For *freedom, and for truth, and right?*

Is this the land where Jefferson
Declared *all* equal born, and free ?
The land where hosts of valiant men
Laid down their lives for liberty !
*This land, where men are bought and sold,
Parents and children, changed for gold*



LINES

ON READING WEBSTER'S SPEECH ON CLAY'S COMPROMISE
RESOLUTIONS.

Now hath the North star fallen ! now the gleaming,
That cheered the nation with its matchless light,
Is dimmed, forever dimmed ; nor can the beaming
Of other days restore it to our sight !

He of the mighty heart and brain, whose teaching
Hath been for Justice, Truth, and Liberty,—
Now with polluted, shameless lip, is preaching,
“Man shall not let his brother man go free.”

He, who on Bunker's height hath told the story
Of our forefathers, struggling true and brave ;
Now turns him from that tale of dimless glory
To plead the *master's cause against the slave*

He, who long years ago so proudly, boldly,
Withered the Carolinian in his pride,
Now on the friends of Freedom turns him coldly
And with th' oppressor ranks him, side by side !

He, the proud man of genius, wealth, and letters,
The pampered fav'rite of the public care,
What recks he of the galling chains and fetters ?
What knows he of a mother's dark despair ?

Yet hath he sons and daughters—(spare them, Heaven !)
If they for one short year should feel the wrong,
The anguish with which other hearts are riven,
How it would rouse him like a giant strong !

Make the "peculiar institution" crumble
Into the dust, and with resistless might
Lead forth the North, a countless host, to humble
The *chivalry* that trample on the right!

Does such a man as Webster think the tinging,
That Nature's law has given to the skin,
Can make the spirit bow with servile cringing
And shut out all the God-like from within?

Ho! heroes of the South,—give to your minion
Another hundred thousand; he is brave!
Ah! pay him well, and he will help you pinion
The *soul*, and *body* too, of every slave.

Webster was *once* "*a man*," his country's glory,
And all the future with his fame seemed big.
He's now—his lips, not mine, have told the story—
A Massachusetts,-Marshfield,-Taylor-Whig!!

Ay, Justice, Truth, and Mercy have departed,
Turned by ambition from that once proud soul,—
And He, the strong, the great, the lion-hearted,
Hath fallen ere he reached the wished-for goal.

LINES ON READING THE FUGITIVE SLAVE BILL.

SHALL not shelter the slave? Who says that my home
Shall not shelter the wretched, oppressed, and forlorn?
Who bids me be deaf when for pity they come,
The helpless, down-trodden ones, weary and worn?

Think our statesmen that laws will convert into stone
The heart that can feel, can condemn, can approve,
The heart that can do what it still would have done,
Deeds of justice and mercy, of truth and of love?

Oh! *I* am a mother. Could *I* see my child
Torn, shrieking with anguish, away from my heart,
And know she must linger, debased and defiled,
And be sold like a beast in the slave-dealer's mart?

Could I live, and yet know that in darkness and wrong
The soul of my child would go down to the grave?
That mourning in fetters through all its life long
It would lie down at last in the tomb of a slave?

Should my child from his bondage, a fugitive flee,
Far, far from his tyrant, and soul-crushing chain,
Oh! would not my curses fall, fearless and free,
On the demon who'd seize him and bind him again?

And if with his bleeding and weary-worn feet .
He begged for a refuge, Northman, at your door;
Oh! could you with fetters the wretched one meet
And bear him a slave to his tyrant once more?

Oh! fathers, oh! mothers, who boast ye are free,
Is my child or thy child more precious or dear,
More near to our hearts than the slave-child must be
To the heart of a parent, who toileth in fear?

Then list to the pleadings of Nature and Love,
And spurn the vile law that would turn you to fiends.
Let the penalty fall, 'twill a benison prove,
Just men will defend you; true men stand your friends.

Ay, spurn it and those who have made it a law
(May Charity cover each name with a blot!),
And when from the post they've disgraced, they withdraw,
May their names, deeds, and shame be forever forgot.

My country, my country, oh! woe be the hour
When thy sons bent them low at a slave-dealer's nod,
Sold themselves, for a price, to the South and its power,
Turned traitors to justice, themselves, and to God!

A BALLAD OF PORT ROYAL, SOUTH CAROLINA.

JANUARY 1, 1863.

BENEATH the grand old live oaks
On Port Royal's slave-cursed isle,
Where the midway days of winter
Wear the summer's sunniest smile,
They had gathered in by thousands
From the islands of the sea,
At the call of Governor Saxton
To be told that they were free.

From the orange groves of Florida,
From Georgia's rice-swamps dread,
From Carolina's trait'rous lands,
They came—five thousand "head."
Some had escaped from masters,
Some redeemed by War's red hand,
Some were left behind by rebels
When they fled our conquering bands.

Old and young, and little children,
Deaf and blind, and sick and lame,

In their worn and tattered garments,
Shoeless, hatless—in they came—
Just as slavery's ruth had left them,
Trembling, doubting, waiting, sad,
Bewildered—ever hopeful
For a word to make them glad.

There they gathered 'neath the live oaks
Where the whipping-post once stood,
Where the victim's cry for mercy
Had been answered with his blood.
There they gathered round the platform
Built by our Northmen brave,
For the friends of Truth and Freedom
Who should meet to cheer the slave.

In their midst was Governor Saxton,
Son of Massachusetts, true,
And the teachers of the people,
And the chaplains clothed in blue.
Near them gallant Col. Higginson,
With his South Carolina band,
Six hundred strong—a red-breeched throng*—
Stood to guard the island land.

* During the first months of their enlistment, Colonel Higginson's men were dressed in blue coats and red pantaloons.

Outside were grouped the masses,
Looking on with strange content,
And like a rim around all these
Circled Hawley's regiment.
'Twas New Year's Day, and "dress parade"
Had just been held, you know,
And officers and men had come
To see the "nigger show."

And many a sneering laugh was heard,
And many an ill-timed jest,
And muttered curse, that such as these
In army blue were dressed;
For Northmen had not learned to trust
And feel, God ever good
Had all the nations of the earth
Created of one blood.

And now stepped forth the chaplain
And put up a fervent prayer,
Then a song of our rejoicing
Floated through the wintry air.
Followed now "The Proclamation,"
By the gray-haired Brisbane read,
Who, long ago, his chattels freed,
And from Port Royal fled.

How silently all listened while
Those golden words were spoken—
“You are free, all free forever.
This day your chains are broken.
Look aloft! This flag above you
Is the flag of liberty,
And your father, Abraham Lincoln,
Has declared you all are free.”

Then a shout of joy went upward
From the ransomed heart of men,
Such a shout of joy, as never
I shall hear on earth again.

* * * *

For the First South Carolina,
One a silken banner brought,
Which in more than starry beauty
Had by woman's hand been wrought;
For upon its folds of azure,
As it floated overhead,
“The year of Jubilee has come”
In silver words we read.

’Twas with fitting words presented
To the colonel standing by,
Who with silent, deep emotion,
Sought for calmness to reply.

While he paused, a worn-old mother
 Raised her voice of tremulous strain,
As with clasped hands, gazing upward
 She poured forth this glad refrain :
 “ My country, 'tis of Thee,
 Sweet land of Liberty,
 Of thee I sing.
 Land where my fathers died,
 Land of the pilgrim's pride,
 From every mountain side,
 Let Freedom ring.”

Then the young men and the maidens
 Joined their voices loud and strong,
Till the live oaks seemed to quiver
 As the chorus swept along.
To and fro the old gray mosses
 Waved their gladness in the breeze,
Sweeping onward, freedom laden,
 To proclaim it to the seas.

And the mocking-birds in silence
 Listened as it were a prayer,
Uttered by some bright evangel
 For the broken sufferers there ;

While the clouds above us parted,
As an angel wing had stirred,
And the morning stars were singing,
And the sons of God had heard.

When they ceased, the Northern soldier
In deep silence dropped his tears,
That old anthem of his school-days
Had called back the loves of years;
And his heart grew soft as woman's,
As he thought of friends and home.
“Let the black man fight for freedom,”
So they said, “in time to come.”

“We'll not hinder, but will help him
To cast off his galling chain,
And by yon flag—we swear that he
Shall ne'er be bound again.”
Then forth stepped Col. Higginson,
The flag-staff in his hand,
And to his chosen sergeant
He gave his glad command.

“Come forward, Sergeant Rivers,
Take your country's flag to-day.
You have heard the ‘Proclamation’
That has swept your chains away.

To your loyal hands I give it,
On its silken folds you see,
Writ in shining silver letters,
" 'Tis the year of Jubilee. ' "

Then came forward Sergeant Rivers,
With a face as black as night,
And he seized the silken banner
And shook out the folds of light.
There, beneath those moss-hung branches,
Where once echoed shrieks of woe,
Poured he forth his spirit's fullness
To the listening crowd below.

Beneath those moss-hung branches,
Black man never spoke before
Such bold words of lofty meaning
To old Beaufort's sounding shore.
" Oh! black men, brothers, sisters,
I before you proudly stand,
Holding fast this flag of freedom
In my own toil-worn right hand.
" But just now, I was a slave-man,
Now—a *freeman*—strong for fight.
By every lash I've ever borne,
I'll battle for the Right.

Good Jesus is our Captain
In the camp and on the field—
And we'll follow where He leads us,
And to Death alone we'll yield.

“We will ne'er forget this motto,
‘Th’ year of Jubilee has come.
And, comrades, we'll maintain it
Till each ransomed slave is home.
But if in some fierce battle
Fought with the Confederate rag,
I should fall—hide me away, boys,
But save my glorious flag.”

So spoke the noble Rivers,
But one hour ago a slave—
And each loyal heart that heard him,
To this black man honor gave.
For the colored standard bearer
Three times three were cheerily given,
And black and white joined in a shout
That rent the very heaven.

That day from out Port Royal
Went the freedmen on their way,
To till the sands unfettered,
Or to join the bloody fray ;

And Jacksonville and Darien,
Port Hudson, Olustee,
Fort Wagner and Fort Pillow
Prove the black man's bravery.

And tell us how a race of slaves
Among their masters stood,
And for their flag and country
Like as water poured their blood;
How soldiers in our army blue
They fed wherever found,
How helped the 'scaping prisoner,
And turned the baying hound.

And how that race, four million strong,
Not one foul traitor gave
To help oppress a brother man,
Or bind him as a slave—
Instead, two hundred thousand men
To help in Freedom's fight—
Brave volunteers—to win, or die,
With Union and the Right.

Can we forget, oh ! Northmen,
These true and gallant braves,
And in this peace-hour fail them,
Leaving them half bound slaves,

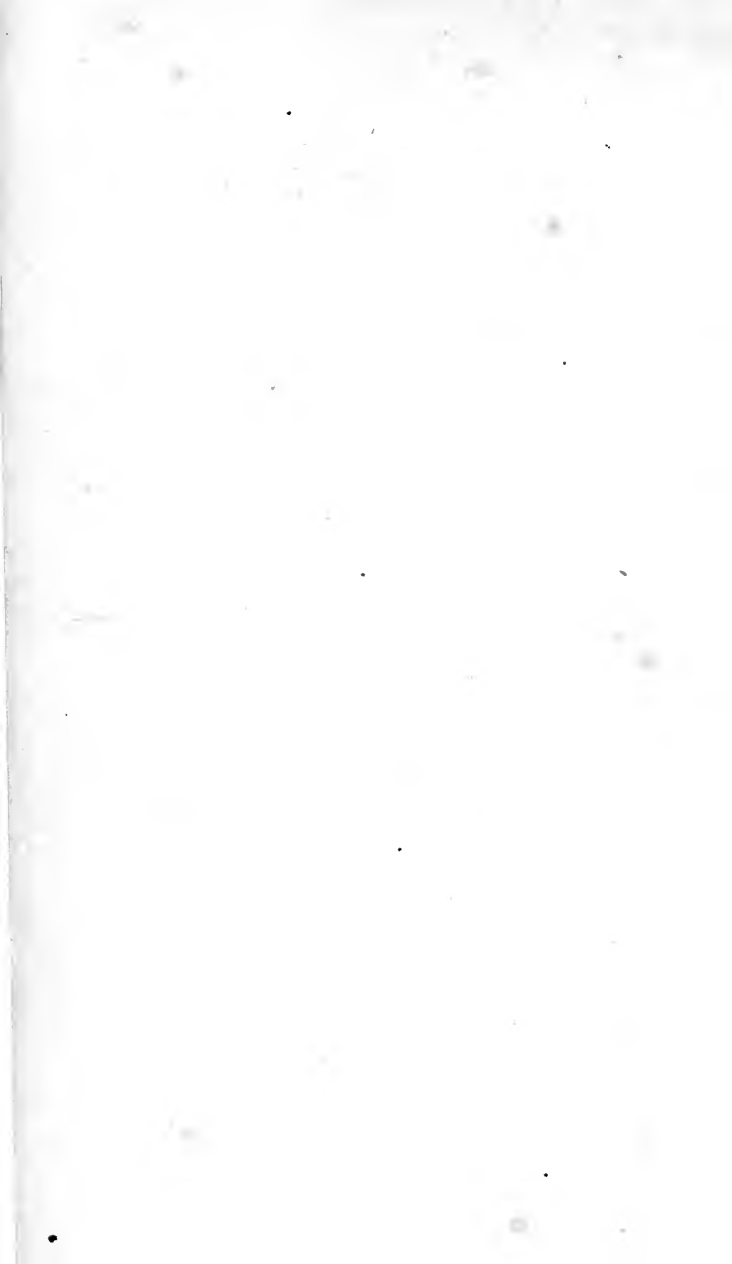
While the highest boon of Freedom
We grant to traitors, who,
With fiendish hearts and bloody hands,
Destroyed our boys in blue ?

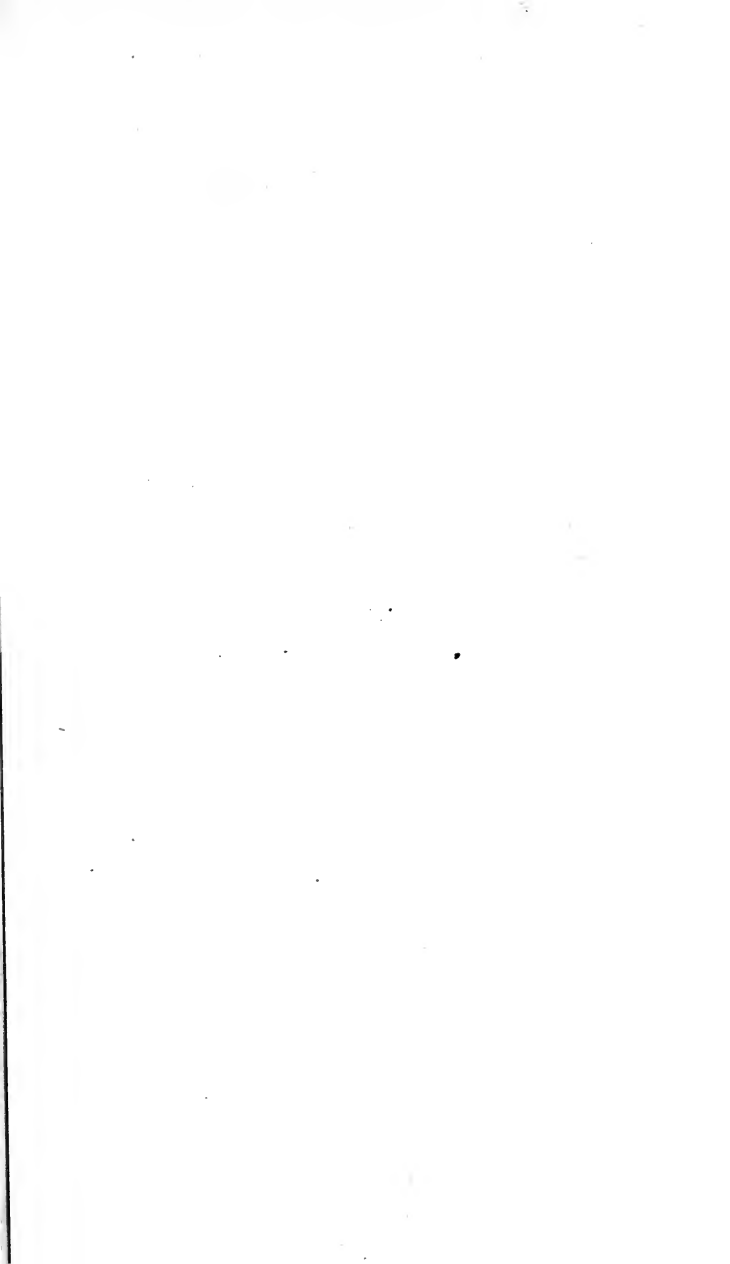
Who spurned our flag from Sumter ?
Who filled our land with woe ?
Who murdered our loved Lincoln ?
By all that's sacred—No !
By all our countless widows,
By all our orphans' tears,
By the land so desolated,
By the blasted hopes of years,

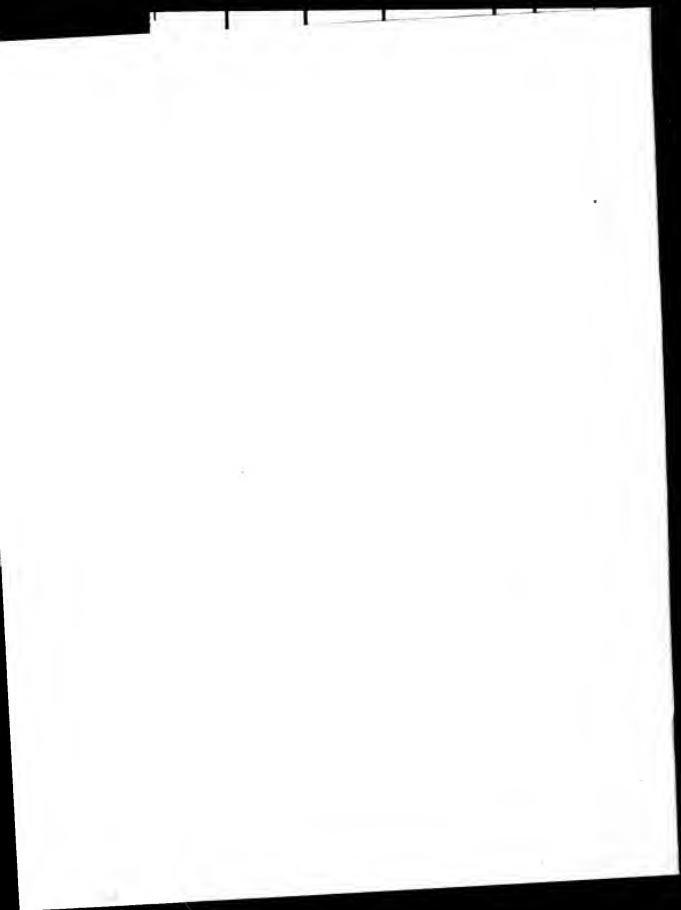
By the ghosts of half a million,
Who have died that there might be,
Throughout our land, no slavery,
That all men should be free ;
By all the truth and honor
God gives to men below,
By all the prayers and scars and wrong
Of that four millions—No !

THE END.









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